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cover design/ohkawa

皇國の守護者

五

原作 佐藤大輔
漫画 伊藤　悠

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※この作品はフィクションです　実在の人物・団体・事件などにはいっさい関係ありません。

登場人物紹介

◆皇国軍◆

妹尾少尉
第三中隊所属。隊全滅により第二中隊に合流。

兵藤少尉
第二中隊所属の尖兵小隊長。

猪口曹長
熱血の曹長。新城の参謀的な存在。

千早（剣牙虎）
新城が世話をしている曹秀な第牙虎。

新城直衛少佐
本編の主人公。野戦昇進し、第十一大隊を指揮する。剣牙虎の扱いに精通。

実仁親王
〈皇国〉の皇王にして、陸軍少将。

羽鳥守人
皇室魔導院に所属。新城の友人。

守原英康
公爵陸軍大将。北領鎮台の司令長官。

笹嶋定信
水軍中佐。転進支援隊本部指令。

蓮乃
保胤の実質的な正室。新城の義姉。

駒城篤胤
五将家-皇城の当主。保胤の父。

窪岡淳和
保皇の友人。準男爵-陸軍少将。

駒城保胤
陸皇中将。新城の皇兄にあたる。

◆帝国軍◆

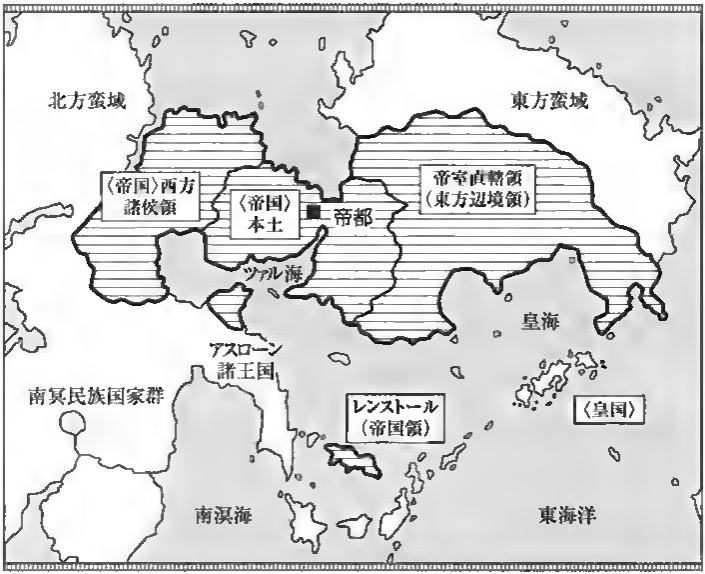
ロボフ
バルクホルンの部下。軍皇を務める。

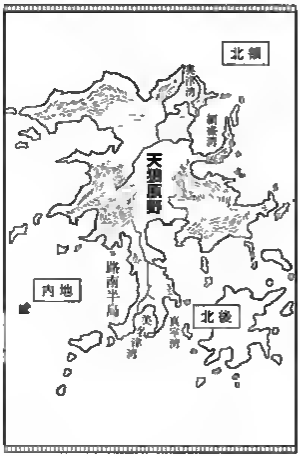
バルクホルン
〈帝国〉陸軍の大尉。兵からの信頼が厚い。

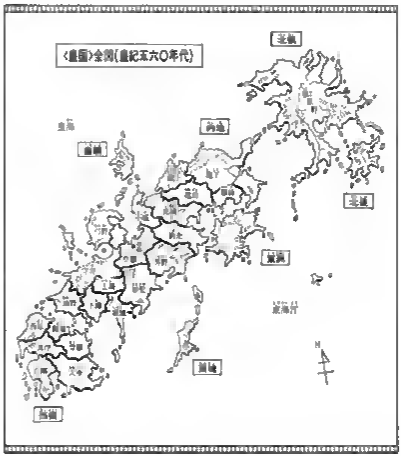
メレンティン
〈帝国〉東方辺境鎮定軍-作戦参謀。

カミンスキィ
〈帝国〉陸軍の皆き大佐。ユーリアの愛人。

ユーリア
〈帝国〉陸軍の元帥。〈皇国〉皇略の総司令官。


北方蛮域
東方蛮域
〈帝国〉西方
諸侯領
〈帝国〉
本土
帝都
帝室直轄領
(東方辺境領)
ツァル海
皇海
アスローン
諸王国
南冥民族国家群
レンストール
(帝国領)
〈皇国〉
南溟海
東海洋


北領
天狼盾脊
内地
北後


〈皇国〉全図(皇紀五六〇年代)

神代の昔、人と龍の間に結ばれたとされる〈大協約〉が世界秩序の根幹を成す〈大協約〉世界――。最大の大陸ツァルラントに興った優路王朝はいくつもの内陸国家や諸部族を併呑し、超大国〈帝国〉としてわずかに残る諸勢力をも睥睨していた。ツァルラント東端より海洋によって隔てられた洋上に存在する新興国〈皇国〉。北領・内地・東洲・皇嶺・南塊・西領の六つの大島からなるこの島国は、東方の周辺部族――〈帝国〉人の言う〝蛮族〟――のひとつ、〈帝国〉の勢威を脅かすには至らないと見なされ、東洲公による内乱を最後に二十四年間大規模な戦役を経ることもなく平和の中にあった。

前巻までのあらすじ

だが突如、超大国〈帝国〉が、〈皇国〉最北端、北領に侵攻を開始。〈皇国〉は北領からの撤退を決断。独立捜索剣虎兵第十二大隊は、味方の転進支援にあたっていた。敵輜重を叩くため予備隊を率い西進する新城は圧倒的不利な状況の中、輜重段列を守るため迎撃にきたバルクホルンの騎兵部隊と激突！　激しい戦闘の末、敵部隊は撤退。新城は負傷したバルクホルンを捕え森へと逃げ込むが、数刻後〈帝国〉軍に完全包囲される。なおも増強される敵部隊を前に応戦する中、敵銃弾に打たれ漆原を失う。夕刻、笹嶋との約束の時間を稼ぎきった新城は任務を完遂し、〈大協約〉に基づき降伏。〈帝国〉軍の俘虜となった。。。

第三章

許容もなく慈悲もなく 9

センサ・ペルドゥーノ・センサ・ピエタ

February 24th, 7AM.
Onae bridge camp
GIVE ME THE FLAG.
THE FLAG.
HAAH
HAAH
HAAH
HAAH

ドン
ザザザ
UAAHHHHH
ドス

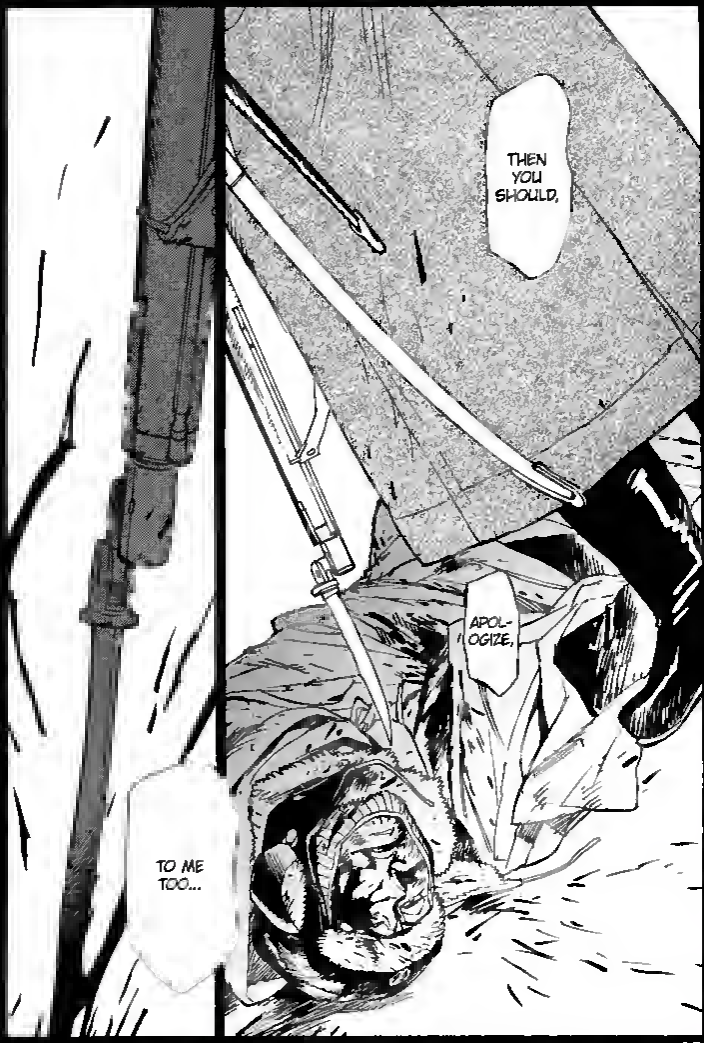
READY YOUR SWORDS!
YEAH, COME ON!

SHIT. DON'T LAUGH AT US!
DON'T LAUGH!
CHOPPING

DAMN,
IT
HURTS!

IT HURTS!
GYAAHHHH
IT HURTS LIKE HELL!

LOOK HERE!
APOLOGIZE TO MY SUBORDINATES!


THEN YOU SHOULD.
APOL-OGIZE.
TO ME TOO...

ドシュ
ドシュ

HANS
RELAY THIS MESSAGE.
YES, SIR.

THEY FOUGHT UNTIL THE LAST MAN.

THE 15 SURVIVORS RECEIVED THE NEWS WITH APATHY
THIS MORNING, THEY FAILED TO STOP OUR ATTACK AT THE BRIDGE
AND WERE WIPED OUT.
THAT'S UNDERS-TANDABLE.

THEY'RE GOING TO BE EMOTIONALLY NUMB FOR A WHILE
THEIR BODIES AND MINDS ARE VERY TIRED

IT'S NATURAL FOR US TO BE THIS EXHAUSTED
THINGS ARE PROCEEDING NATURALLY.

KILL EVERYONE.
WE'VE ESCAPED CERTAIN DEATH AND SURRENDERED
ALL RIGHT FIRE!
AND WILL NOW LIVE ON AS PRISONERS OF WAR

I'M NOT THAT EXHAUSTED YET.
AND EVEN NOW I STILL HAVE MY DUTIES AS COMMANDER TO FULFILL.
MOREOVER

UNTIL WE HAVE HANDED OVER OUR WEAPONS, WE ARE NOT OFICIALLY CONSIDERED "PRISONERS OF WAR".
SERGEANT MAJOR,
I REALLY DON'T LIKE THIS.
IT DOESN'T REALLY LOOK THAT JUST MAKING US PRISONERS
WILL BE ENOUGH TO SATISFY THAT COLONEL
WE NEED TO STAND UP PROUD FOR A LITTLE LONGER
UNDERSTOOD, SIR!
すう…

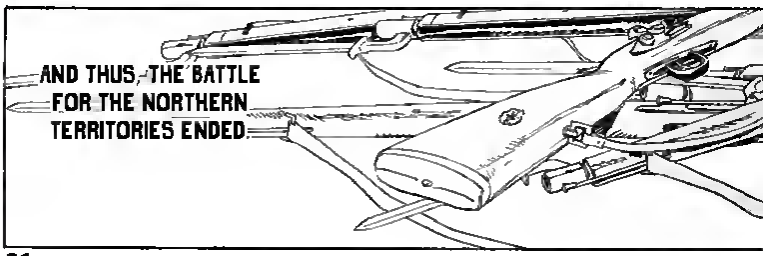
WE WILL NOW PERFORM AN EQUIPMENT INSPECTION!
ANYONE WHO MESSES UP WILL HAVE TO DO 15 PUSH UPS!
LINE UP!
I CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO TURN IN THE BELONGINGS OF MY DECEASED SUBORDINATES
THEY'RE GOING TO BE BURIED HERE IN THIS SNOWY BATTLEFIELD FOR HUNDREADS OF YEARS
ARE WE DELIVERING THEM NOW?
WE'RE NOT PICKING THEM UP

ス.

11TH BATALLION, FORWARD, MARCH!

SABERTOOTH SOLDIERS, ADVANCE!!

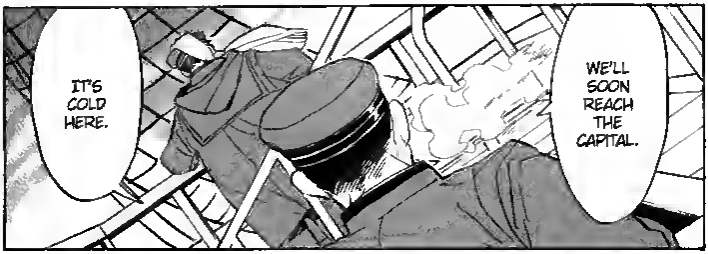
THEY'RE DESCENDING FROM THE HILL AS IF THEY WERE THE VICTORS.


AND THUS, THE BATTLE
FOR THE NORTHERN
TERRITORIES ENDED.

FIGHT UNTIL THE LAST SOLDIER DIES!
THERE'S NO GREATER HAPPINESS,
THAN FIGHTING LIKE A DEMON AND DYING IN DEFENSE OF YOUR COUNTRY!
THAT WAS THE LAST WE HEARD OF THEM.
ANY FURTHER REPLIES?

NO... AS I EXPECTED,
I'M NOT RECEIVING ANY SIGNALS.

THE SACRIFICE OF 600 MEN ALLOWED THE SAFE EVACUATION OF 12,000...
THEY ARE DEFINITELY HEROES.
IT'S UNFORTUNATE THAT THE DEAD CANNOT HEAR THESE PRAISES.
COMMANDER, THE SEA CONDITION IS PERFECT.
WE SHOULD ARRIVE AT THE CAPITAL WITHIN OUR PLANNED SCHEDULE


IT'S COLD HERE.
WE'LL SOON REACH THE CAPITAL.

MY REGRET, SHAME, AND INDIGNATION WILL KEEP ME WARM.

I AM EAGER TO RETURN TO THE BATTLEFIELD SO I CAN REDEEM MYSELF
AHH... IS IT ABOUT THAT FINAL MES-SAGE?

JUST LOOK AT THIS.
IT WON'T END HERE
WE NEED TO COME UP WITH A PLAN SO WE CAN AVOIDING REPEATING THAT BLUNDER
I CAN'T GIVE IN TO THOSE DESPICABLE TACTICS
IF I AM TO RETURN TO THE CAPITAL,
THINGS ARE NOT THAT SIMPLE

RETURN TO BATTLE AGAINST THE ROYAL ARMY AT ONCE!
IT IS OUR DUTY TO THE EMPEROR TO BEGIN AN ALL-OUT COUNTER-OFFENSIVE!
That day, imperial capital

OUR MAIN FORCES STATIONED AT THE NORTHERN GARRISONS HAVE MANAGED TO WITHDRAW
NOW..
I WONDER WHAT KIND OF EXPRESSION WILL GENERAL MORIHARA SHOW US WHEN HE RETURNS AFTER THIS CRUSHING DEFEAT..
I LOOK FORWARD TO IT.

APPOINTEE HATORI, SECOND SUPERVISOR.
OH?
YOU... REALLY LOOK LIKE YOU'RE ENJOYING WHAT'S HAPPENING... YOU'RE NOT SPEAKING SERIOUSLY, RIGHT?
AHHH, I AM INDEED ENJOYING ALL OF THIS

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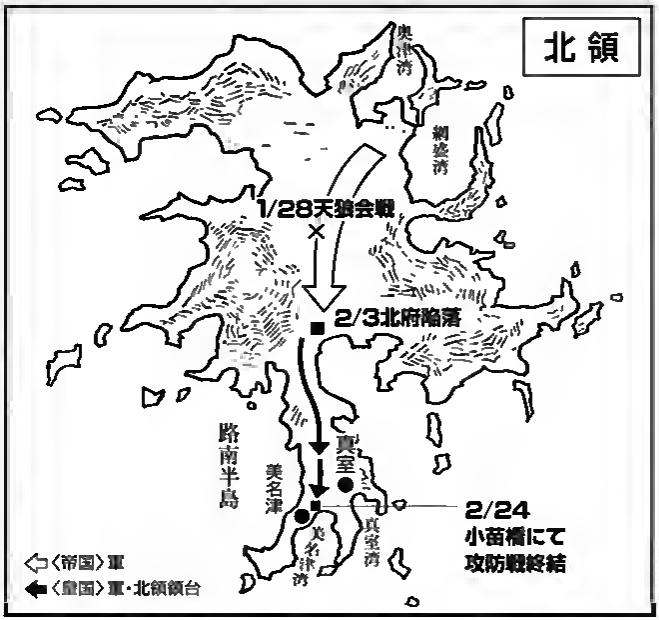
Typesetter: Noon
QC: JAC

〈北領紛争〉戦況総括



〈皇紀五百六十八年〉……

一月十四日：◆〈帝国〉軍艦隊、北領・奥津湾沖に出現

一月二十八日：◆天狼会戦
北領鎮台軍三万は二刻ともたず潰走。西田少尉、戦死。

二月　三日：◆北府陥落

九日：◆開念寺に集合
偵察任務中、若菜大尉、戦死。新城、第二中隊長に。

十日：◆伏撃作戦
大隊副官伊藤少佐、戦死。新城、第十一大隊の大隊長に。

十三日：◆笹嶋中佐、前線の新城のもとを訪れる
新城、時戦昇進で大尉に。笹嶋から、味方の転進支援のために、二月二十四日までの十日間、時間を稼ぐことを厳命される。新城は、敵に食料などが渡るのを阻止するための真室穀倉砲撃を条件に承諾。

十四日：◆笹嶋中佐、巡洋艦「大瀬」艦長・坪田中佐に真室穀倉砲撃を依頼

十五日：◆真室川渡河点にて第十一大隊、交戦開始
新城、砲撃の後、真室大橋を焼き落とし、二日間時間を稼ぐ。

十七日：◆真室大橋から南方十三里
住民たちが避難した後、村々を焼きながら進む新城たち。ルートから大きくはずれる真室穀倉は「大瀬」が砲撃し、食料などの物資を敵の手に渡さないという作戦。

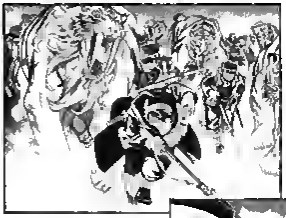
十九日：◆御崎岬沖
坪田中佐率いる巡洋艦「大瀬」、大時化で沈没、砲撃失敗。

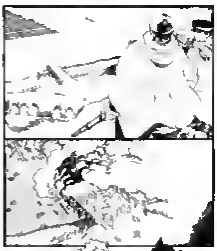
二十日：◆小苗橋攻防戦開始
途中の村々を焼かれ、糧秣不足に陥る〈帝国〉軍。新城、上苗への迂回を察知し、こちらに注意をひくため砲撃を開始。その後、小苗橋を爆破。

二十一日：◆〈帝国〉軍、迂回作戦を開始
カミンスキィ率いる大軍が上真滝河点から迂回作戦を敢行。金森の導術でその動きを察知した新城は、兵棚・妹尾に堅川護河点を託し、迂回部隊迎撃へ向かう。堅川護河点の〈皇国〉軍に、砲撃を失敗した真室穀倉から糧秣が届く。

二十三日：◆新城VS迂回部隊
迂回部隊の糧秣を狙い撃ちし、足止めを試みる新城。カミンスキィ、それを察知し、新城たちを殲滅すべく、バルクホルンの部隊を派遣する。

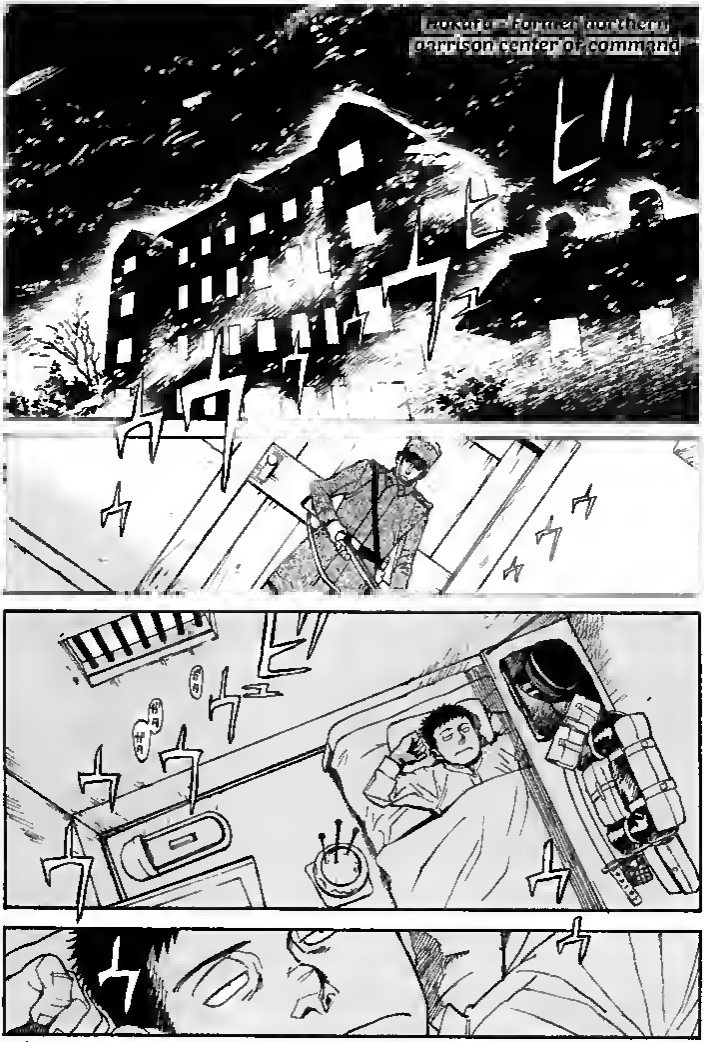
二十四日：◆戦闘終結、降伏
金森は闘明け前に死亡。戦軍の末、バルクホルンを人質にとった新城たちだったが、〈帝国〉軍に完全包囲される。闘壊に身を闘しての闘しい白兵戦の中、孝原少尉が死亡。堅川護河点の兵闘、妹尾の闘壊も全滅。それでも何とか夕刻まで闘闘を闘ぎきった新城は、闘伏を決闘。





北領での戦闘は全て終結――。降伏した新城たちを待つ処遇とは…？

皇國の守護者


Morioka - former northern garrison center of command

Prisoners of war 1

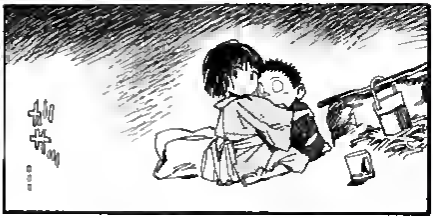
Imperial Era, year 544

Eastern state, summer

FLINT
GUN.
DAD WAS A STATE SOLDIER, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE DIED OR IF HE EVEN DIED AT ALL
MY VILLAGE WAS BURNED, AND EVERYONE WAS KILLED
OUR LORD MUST HAVE BEEN DEFEATED...

THEY ALL DIED.. EVERYONE...
THEY'RE ALL DEAD...

ナナ
ナナ

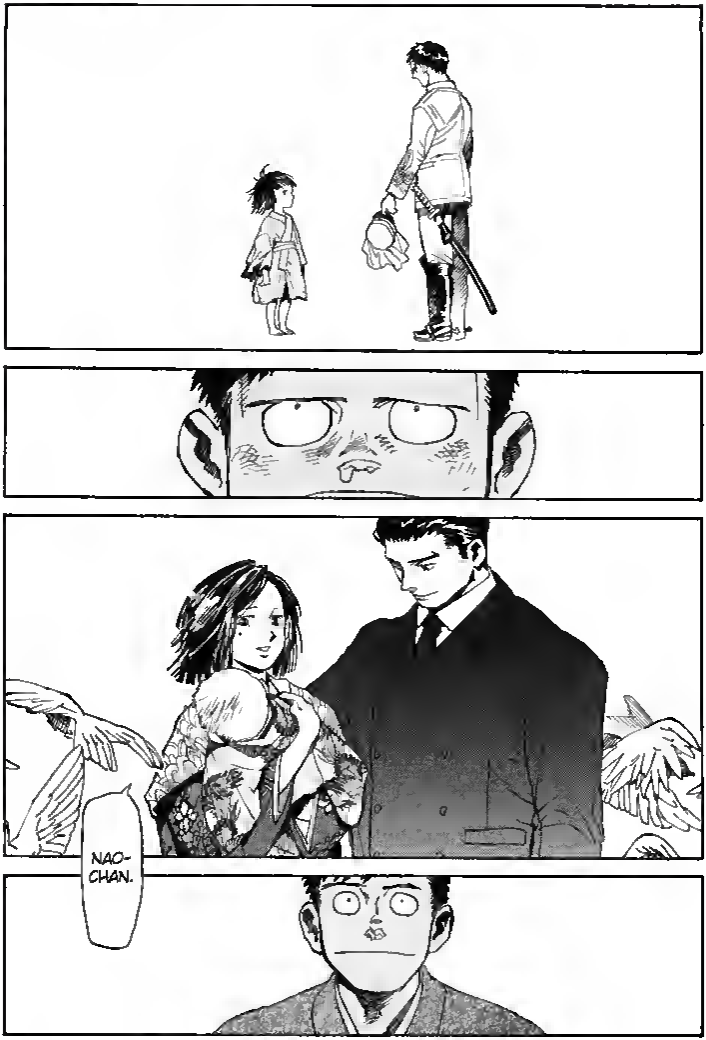

ナナ…

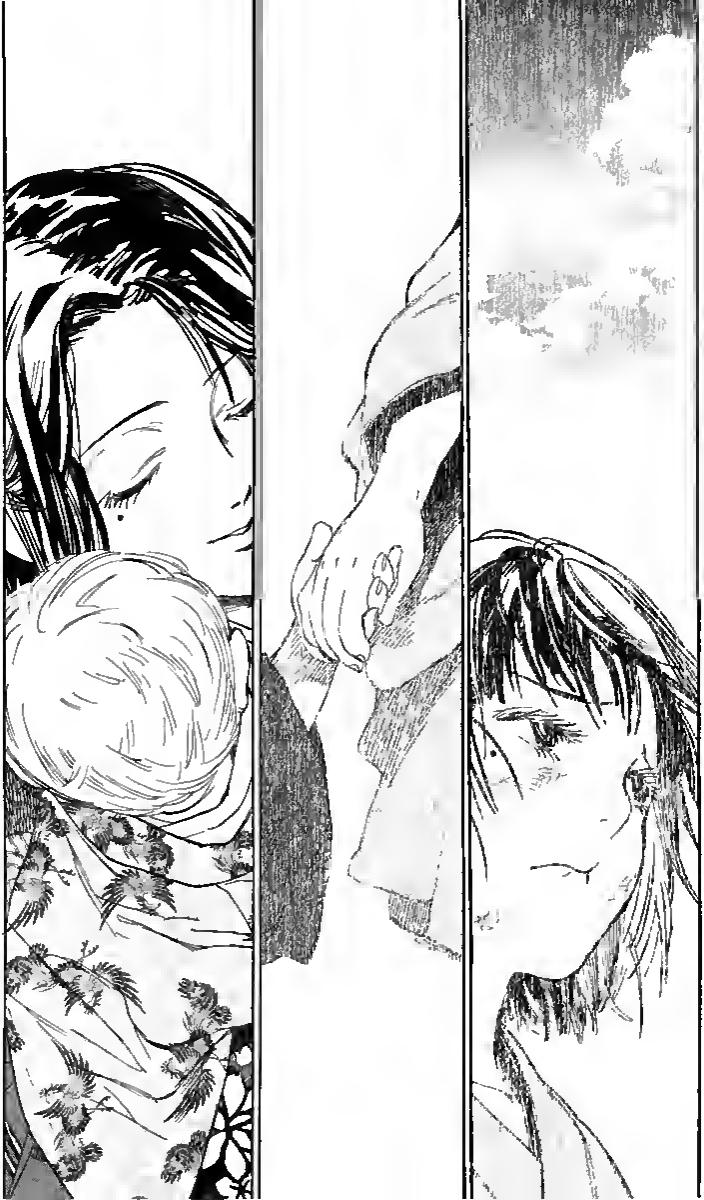
THE SOLE SURVIVORS FLED.
AFTER THAT,

DID YOU WET YOURSELF AGAIN?
I'M NOT MAD.
I'M NOT MAD, SO PLEASE STOP CRYING
ヒック
ヒック
ヒック
YOU'RE QUITE SPECIAL...
YOU'RE NOT AFRAID OF THE DARK OR THE NOISE THE WIND MAKES
YOU TAKE WHAT THE PEOPLE WHO DIED LEFT BEHIND,
AND YOU'RE SO CALM EVEN IN FRONT OF A LOST TIGER
AND YOU MAKE ME SO BUSY LOOKING AFTER YOU
THAT I'M SURE EVEN I WILL NOT BE AFRAID OF ANYTHING

THANK YOU.
I AM DEEPLY GRATEFUL
THANK YOU SO MUCH.

YOU WERE LUCKY, BOY.
THAT GIRL IS PRETTY.
AND TO TOP IT OFF...
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW KIND THE YOUNG LORD KUSHIRO IS?
HE PICKS UP ANY ORPHAN THAT HE STUMBLES UPON IN THIS REGION


NAO-
CHAN.



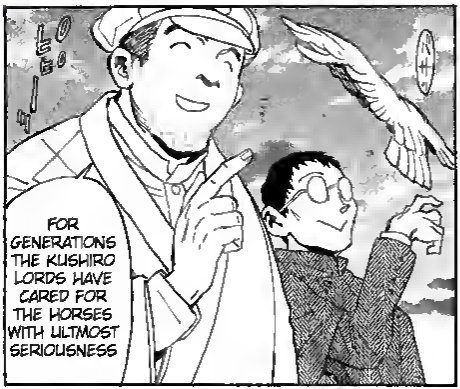
BROTHER, SISTER.
CONGRAT-ULATIONS!

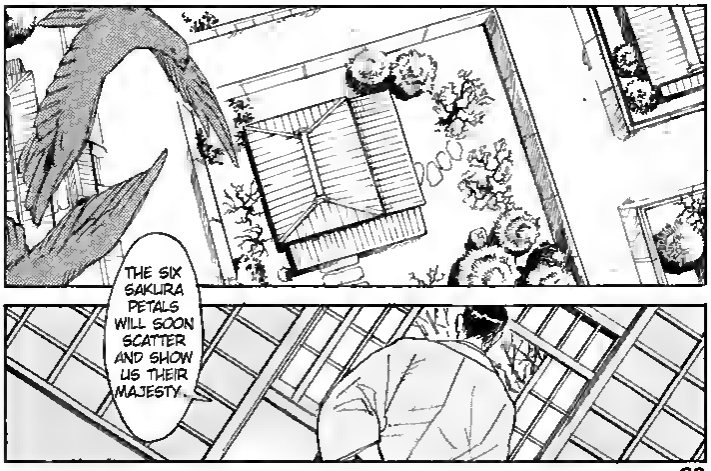
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS,
MAY YOU BE FOREVER HAPPY.
WE WILL SOON REACH THE MAXIMUM TIME ONE'S ALLOWED TO KEEP PRISONERS OF WAR, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GRAND CODE
EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANY PLACE YOU WISH TO RETURN TO, IT MUST BE DONE
...IT'S BECOMING A BIT NOISY AROUND HERE...
AHH, WELL
Imperial Era, Year 568.
Imperial Capital, end of march

バサッ
I WONDER IF EVEN AMIDST THIS TURBULENCE, YOU STILL HAVE THAT UNCHANGING SOUR LOOK ON YOUR FACE
SHINJO.
ヒロヒロ

FUUU
WAA-HHHH
ゴー
ゴト
MASTER, THE WEATHER SURE HAS BEEN NICE LATELY.
WELL, IT IS SU-MMER.
IT WAS STILL COLD AROUND THIS TIME LAST YEAR.
THE STREET CLAIRVOYANTS DID SAY THAT THIS YEAR WE WOULD HAVE BOUNTIFUL HARVESTS AND EVERYTHING WOULD GO WELL
BUT THEN EARLIER THIS YEAR, WE HAD WHAT HAPPENED UP NORTH...
YOU REALLY WORRY TOO MUCH

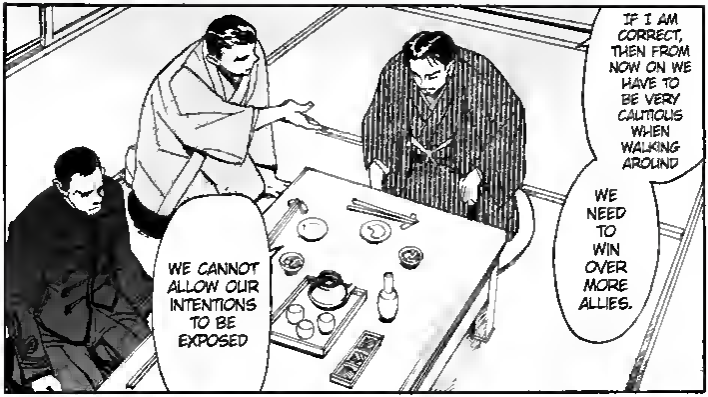
I'M JUST A TEACHER, SO I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT HORSE TRADING..
DOES IT REALLY PROSPER EVEN DURING A LOSING WAR?
OF CO-URSE.
BUT THAT ISN'T REALLY BAD FOR THE HORSE MERCHANTS
HIS EXCELLENCY MORIHARA DID EVERYTHING HE COULD TO HELP THE BUSINESS
HE WAS ORDERED TO LIVE WITH HORSE MERCHANTS FOR ABOUT TWO YEARS
HE'S AN IMPRESSIVE PERSON...
FROM WHOM DO YOU BUY YOUR HORSES?
I BUY THEM FROM KUSHIRO.


FOR GENERATIONS THE KUSHIRO LORDS HAVE CARED FOR THE HORSES WITH UTMOST SERIOUSNESS
AS YOU CAN ALREADY TELL FROM THEIR NAME, THE KUSHIRO ARE SKILLED HORSE TAMERS
THEY LEAVE NOTHING TO BE DESIRED, EVEN COMPARED TO THE ROYAL ARMY'S HORSES


THE SIX SAKURA PETALS WILL SOON SCATTER AND SHOW US THEIR MAJESTY.

YES...THE MIKADO CHERRY BLOSSONS WILL SOON FALL. DON'T YOU THINK SO,
YAS-UTANE?
SOME OF THE CONFI-DENTIAL CONVER-SATIONS WE HAD HERE HAVE POSSIBLY BEEN LEAKED.
I WONDER IF IT'S SOMEONE FROM ONE OF THE RULING FAMILIES
IF THAT'S THE CASE, I BELIEVE THERE'S SOMEONE FROM THE ARMY HEADQ-UARTERS TRAILING ME
IT SEEMS THAT,
SOME UNKNOWN PARTIES HAVE BEEN LOITERING AROUND.
Major General, Baronet Kubooka Atsukazu
THAT MAY NOT BE THE CASE, ATSUKAZU.

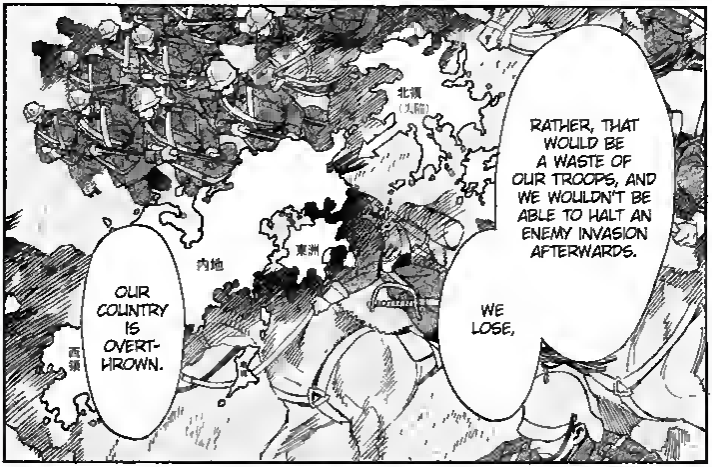
THERE'S A HIGH POSSIBILITY I WAS BEING SPIED ON,
THAT WOULD BE NORMALLY ATTRIBUTED TO SOMEONE IN THE IMPERIAL FAMILY.
Major General, Prince Sanehito


IF I AM CORRECT, THEN FROM NOW ON WE HAVE TO BE VERY CAUTIOUS WHEN WALKING AROUND
WE NEED TO WIN OVER MORE ALLIES.
WE CANNOT ALLOW OUR INTENTIONS TO BE EXPOSED

AHHH, IT'S THE "MODERN ERA NINJAS"
BUT WHO'S IS RESPONSIBLE FOR...
THE IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD'S SORCERY OFFICE

WELL THEN
LIEUTENANT COLONEL KUSHIRO IS THE REASON FOR TODAY'S MEETING WHAT I BELIEVE IT TO BE?
IF POSSIBLE, I'D JUST LIKE TO HAVE A CASUAL CONVERSATIO N WITH YOU, LIKE OLD TIMES RIGHT NOW, I AM HERE FOR,
YOUR MAJESTY,
"THE REASON YOU WERE THINKING"
I AGREE WITH YOU.
UNDE-RSTOOD YASU-TANE. AND YOU TOO, ATS-UKAZU.
BE AT EASE.
SO,
IS THIS ABOUT THAT RECA-PTURE PLAN?

EXACTLY YOUR HIGHNESS, WE NEED TO LAUNCH AN ALL OUT OFFENSIVE DURING THE SUMMER
THAT'S TOO OPTIMISTIC.
AH, UNFORTUNATELY.
EVEN IF WE WERE TO GATHER ALL TROOPS IN OUR TERRITORY, WE'D STILL LOSE
RECAPTURING THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES IS OUT OF THE QUESTION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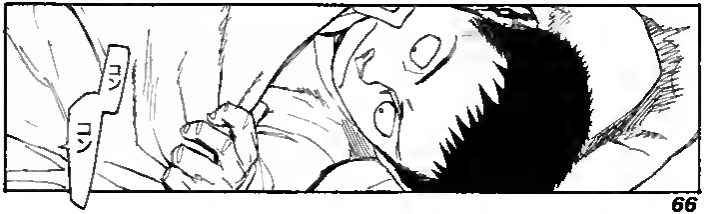
RATHER, THAT WOULD BE A WASTE OF OUR TROOPS, AND WE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO HALT AN ENEMY INVASION AFTERWARDS.
WE LOSE,
OUR COUNTRY IS OVERTHROWN.

THIS OPINION IS WHAT YOU WANT ME TO REPORT TO HIS MAJESTY, ISN'T THAT CORRECT, YASUTANE?
THAT IS SO.
I AM SURE HIS MAJESTY HAS THE SAME OPINION AS I DO

MY OLDER BROTHER DISLIKES APPEARING TO BE TOO SOFT TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC BUT HE ALSO SHARES THE SAME VIEW
BUT NEITHER HE NOR I CAN REPORT THIS TO THE EMPEROR
HIS MAJESTY CAN'T OPENLY SUPPORT OUR PLANS
THEN WE NEED TO CONSIDER ANOTHER SOLUTION
DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING IN MIND, YOUR HIGHNESS?

YOUR YOUNGER BROTHER-IN-LAW... CAPTAIN SHINJO NAOE
WILL RETURN TO THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL ON THE FIRST PRISONER EXCHANGE SHIP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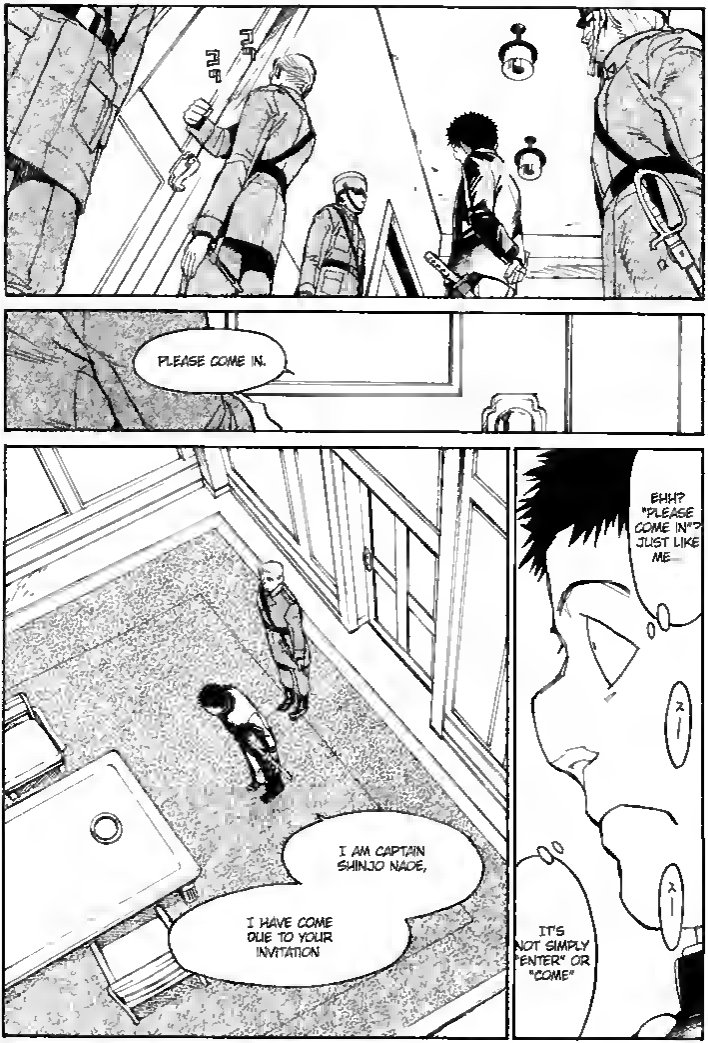
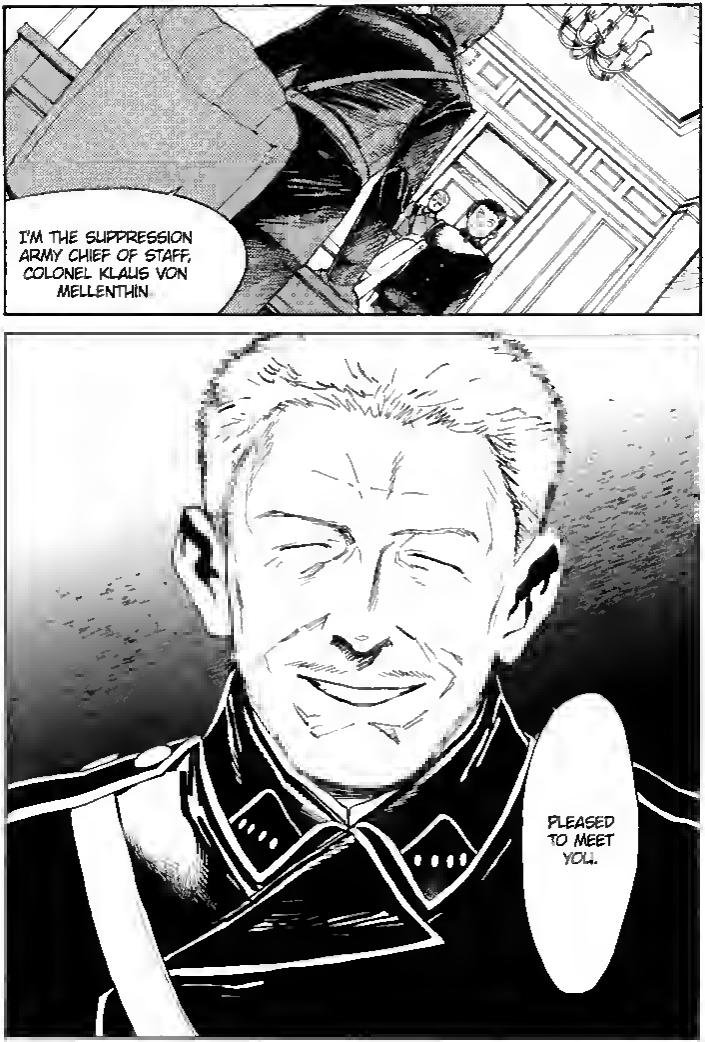
PLEASE COME IN.
I AM CADET ROTMISTROV, FROM THE SUPPRESSION HEADQUARTERS.
ARE YOU BY ANY CHANCE PRISONER CAPTAIN SHINJO?
I AM SHINJO, INDEED
WHAT IS YOUR REQUEST, ROTMISTROV?
I CAME HERE TO BRING YOU A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPPRESSION ARMY'S CHIEF OF STAFF
IF IT WOULD NOT BOTHER YOU, HE WOULD LIKE YOU TO PAY HIM A VISIT IN HIS OFFICE

GO UP THOSE STAIRS.
TO YOUR RIGHT NOW.
TO THE LEFT SIDE.
WHAT KIND OF TERRIBLE JOKE IS THIS?
THEY'RE TREATING A DEFEATED CAPTAIN LIKE A SUPERIOR OFFICER.
CALM DOWN I HAVE TO BREATH SLOWLY
HA!
I CAN'T START TREMBLING OUT OF TENSION
HA!
THIS MAN... I'VE SEEN HIM ON THE BATTL-EFIELD.


PLEASE COME IN.
I AM CAPTAIN SHINJO NAOE,
I HAVE COME DUE TO YOUR INVITATION
EH!!? "PLEASE COME IN"? JUST LIKE ME...
IT'S NOT SIMPLY "ENTER" OR "COME"


I'M THE SUPPRESSION ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF, COLONEL KLAUS VON MELLENTHIN.
PLEASED TO MEET YOU.

MASTER SCANZ

We are currently in need of new members to join our team. If you love manga and would like to work on localizing manga in english, then please send us a request at ***masterscanz@gmail.com****. If possible, please include examples of your previous work. We are looking for dedicated staff, so only apply if you plan on staying for the long-haul.*

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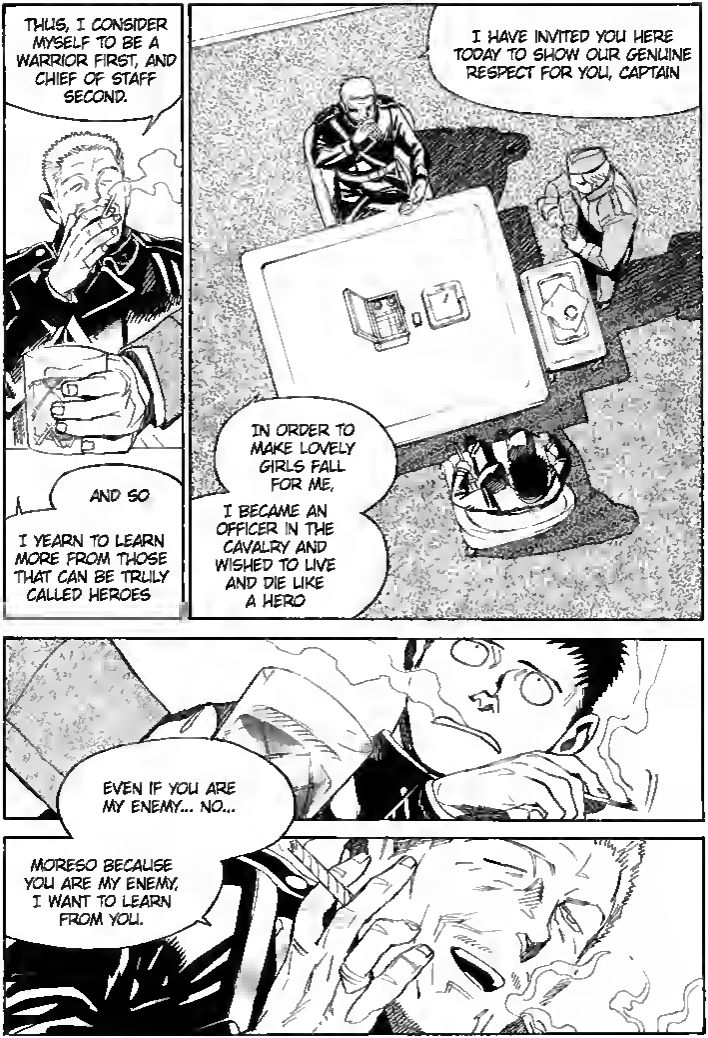
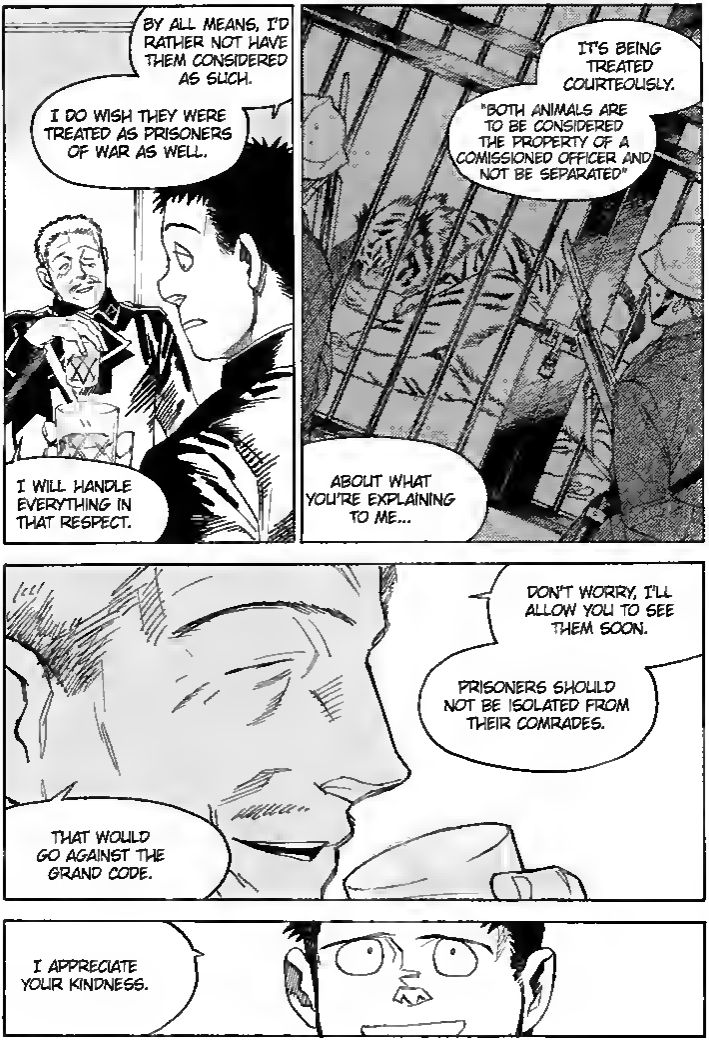
Translator: DiamondEdge
Typesetting: Noon
QC: JAC

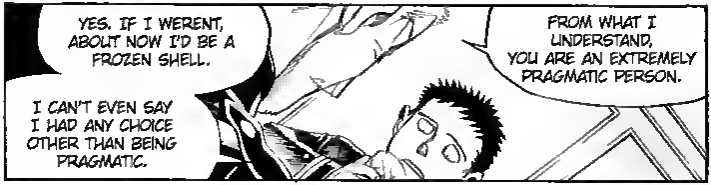
皇国の守護者

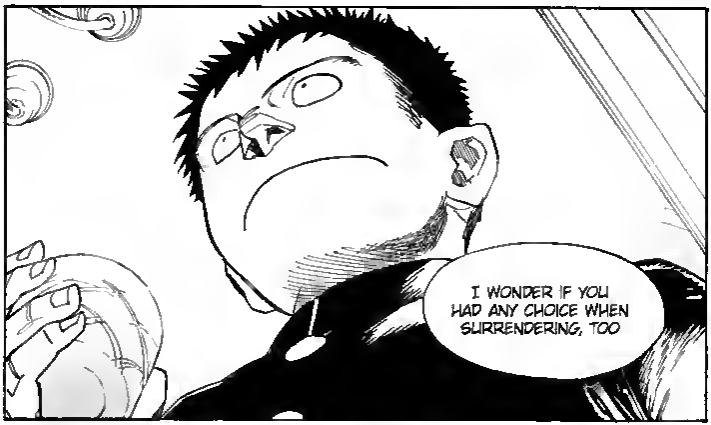
IF YOU SO DESIRE, COLONEL,
YOU MAY HOLD MY WEAPON.
DO YOU SWEAR COMPLIANCE TO THE GRAND CODE?
I SWEAR.
第四章
俘虜 2
THEN, ON MY HONOR AS A COMISSIONED OFFICER,
I CONCEDE TO YOU THE RIGHT TO KEEP IT AS YOUR RANK GIVES YOU THAT PRIVILEGE
THANK YOU FOR COMING HERE


THUS, I CONSIDER MYSELF TO BE A WARRIOR FIRST, AND CHIEF OF STAFF SECOND.
AND SO
I YEARN TO LEARN MORE FROM THOSE THAT CAN BE TRULY CALLED HEROES
I HAVE INVITED YOU HERE TODAY TO SHOW OUR GENUINE RESPECT FOR YOU, CAPTAIN
IN ORDER TO MAKE LOVELY GIRLS FALL FOR ME,
I BECAME AN OFFICER IN THE CAVALRY AND WISHED TO LIVE AND DIE LIKE A HERO
EVEN IF YOU ARE MY ENEMY... NO...
MORESO BECAUSE YOU ARE MY ENEMY, I WANT TO LEARN FROM YOU.

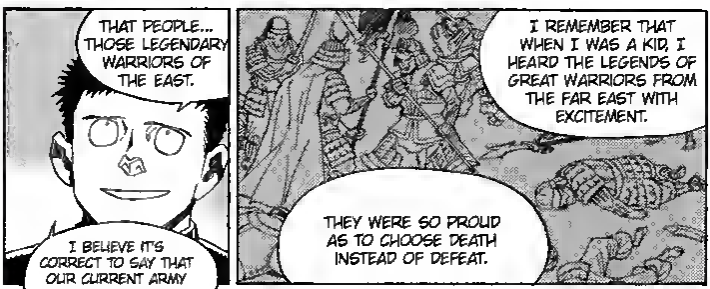
"BEAST TAMERS"...
I'VE WONDERED WHAT KIND OF MAN YOU WERE.
THAT'S WHAT YOU WERE CALLING US, CORRECT?
BECAUSE YOU ARE MY ENEMY
YOU FLATTER ME COLONEL, I HAVE NO WORDS FOR YOUR COMPLIMENTS
IS MY CA... MY SABERTOOTH TIGER SAFE?
THAT BEAST IS BEING TREATED AS AN ENEMY WEAPON, SO IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN STOLEN OR DISPOSED OF
...ALTHOUGH, IN IT'S CASE...

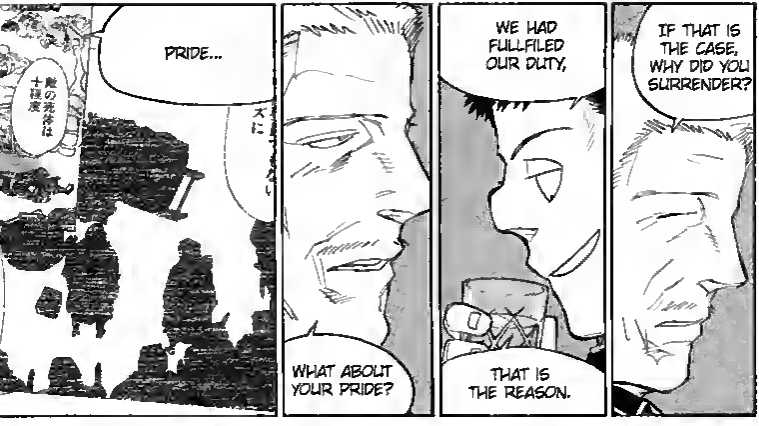

BY ALL MEANS, I'D RATHER NOT HAVE THEM CONSIDERED AS SUCH.
I DO WISH THEY WERE TREATED AS PRISONERS OF WAR AS WELL.
I WILL HANDLE EVERYTHING IN THAT RESPECT.
IT'S BEING TREATED COURTEOUSLY.
"BOTH ANIMALS ARE TO BE CONSIDERED THE PROPERTY OF A COMISSIONED OFFICER AND NOT BE SEPARATED"
ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE EXPLAINING TO ME...
DON'T WORRY, I'LL ALLOW YOU TO SEE THEM SOON.
PRISONERS SHOULD NOT BE ISOLATED FROM THEIR COMRADES.
THAT WOULD GO AGAINST THE GRAND CODE.
I APPRECIATE YOUR KINDNESS.


YES. IF I WERENT, ABOUT NOW I'D BE A FROZEN SHELL.
I CAN'T EVEN SAY I HAD ANY CHOICE OTHER THAN BEING PRAGMATIC.
FROM WHAT I UNDERSTAND, YOU ARE AN EXTREMELY PRAGMATIC PERSON.


I WONDER IF YOU HAD ANY CHOICE WHEN SURRENDERING, TOO

I HAVE HEARD THAT YOUR PEOPLE ARE VERY BRAVE AND HONORABLE.
NO, THERE'S NO PROBLEM IF YOU DON'T WANT TO REPLY TO THAT QUESTION.


THAT PEOPLE... THOSE LEGENDARY WARRIORS OF THE EAST.
I BELIEVE IT'S CORRECT TO SAY THAT OUR CURRENT ARMY STILL HOLDS ON TO THOSE BELIEFS
I REMEMBER THAT WHEN I WAS A KID, I HEARD THE LEGENDS OF GREAT WARRIORS FROM THE FAR EAST WITH EXCITEMENT.
THEY WERE SO PROUD AS TO CHOOSE DEATH INSTEAD OF DEFEAT.


敵の死体は十程度
PRIDE...
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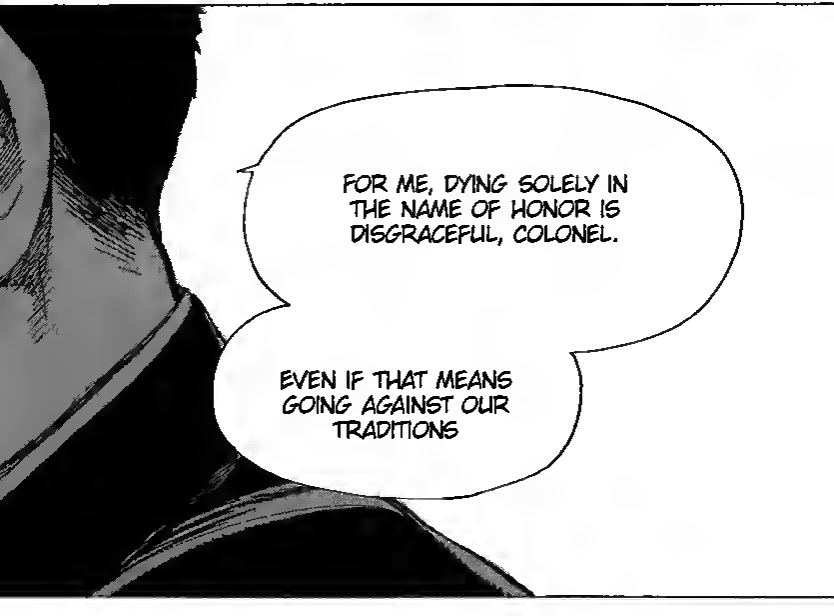
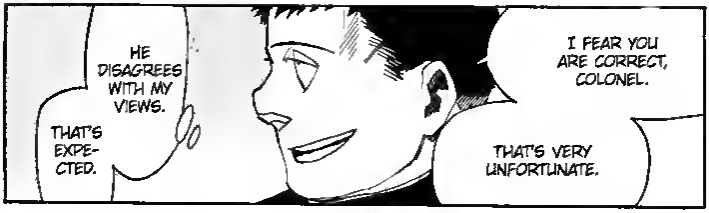
WHAT ABOUT YOUR PRIDE?
WE HAD FULLFILED OUR DUTY,
THAT IS THE REASON.
IF THAT IS THE CASE, WHY DID YOU SURRENDER?

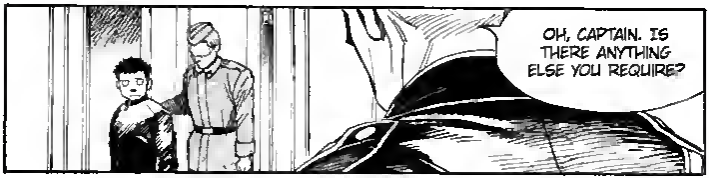

FOR ME, DYING SOLELY IN THE NAME OF HONOR IS DISGRACEFUL, COLONEL.
EVEN IF THAT MEANS GOING AGAINST OUR TRADITIONS

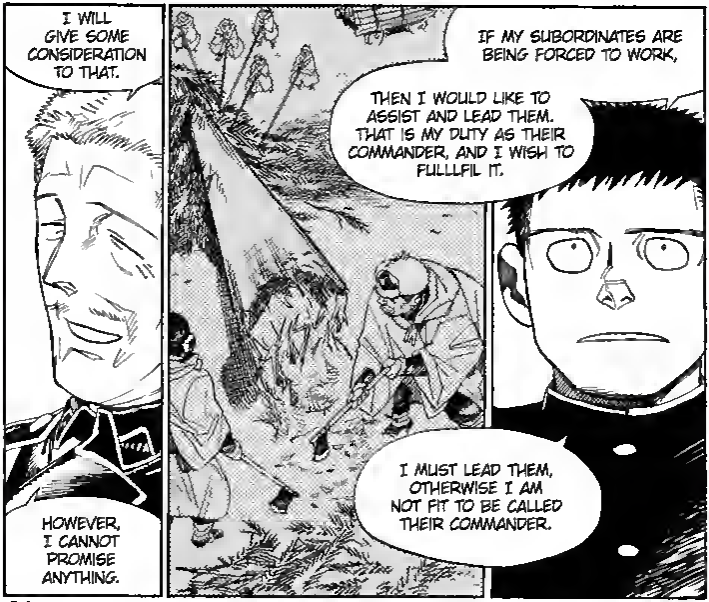
BUT IF IT WILL SAVE THE LIVES OF MY SOLDIERS, THEN I AM WILLING TO IGNORE IT
NO.

I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO INTENTION OF FOLLOWING THAT TRADITION AT ALL!

I SEE...
ISN'T THIS BARBARIAN,
SUPPOSED TO BE A PROUD NOBLE?
HUH?
...THAT'S AN EXCELLENT RESOLUTION, CAPTAIN.
BUT I BELIEVE THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION IN BOTH OUR COUNTRIES PROBABLY DISAGREES WITH YOU.

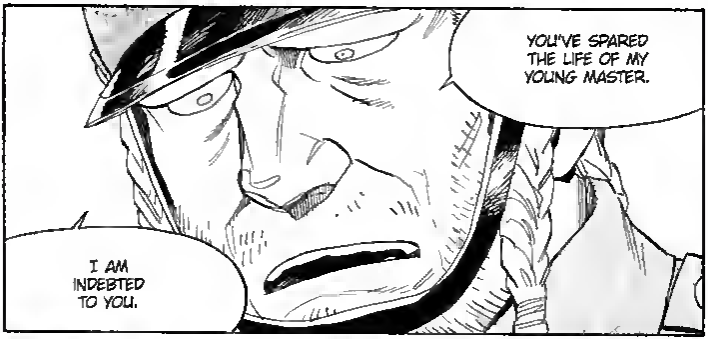

I FEAR YOU ARE CORRECT, COLONEL.
THAT'S VERY UNFORTUNATE.
HE DISAGREES WITH MY VIEWS.
THAT'S EXPE-CTED.


OH, CAPTAIN. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU REQUIRE?


I WILL GIVE SOME CONSIDERATION TO THAT.
HOWEVER, I CANNOT PROMISE ANYTHING.
IF MY SUBORDINATES ARE BEING FORCED TO WORK,
THEN I WOULD LIKE TO ASSIST AND LEAD THEM. THAT IS MY DUTY AS THEIR COMMANDER, AND I WISH TO FULLLFIL IT.
I MUST LEAD THEM, OTHERWISE I AM NOT FIT TO BE CALLED THEIR COMMANDER.

THE COMMANDER OF THE SUPPRESSION ARMY,
IS THE ONE HANDLING EVERYTHING IN REGARDS TO YOU.
THIS IS YOUR NEW ROOM, CAPTAIN.
THIS IS AWFULLY LUXURIOUS...
AM I FACING THE FIRING SQUAD TOMORROW?
NOT AT ALL, CAPTAIN.
!?
.....
YOU TWO, WAIT OUTSIDE.

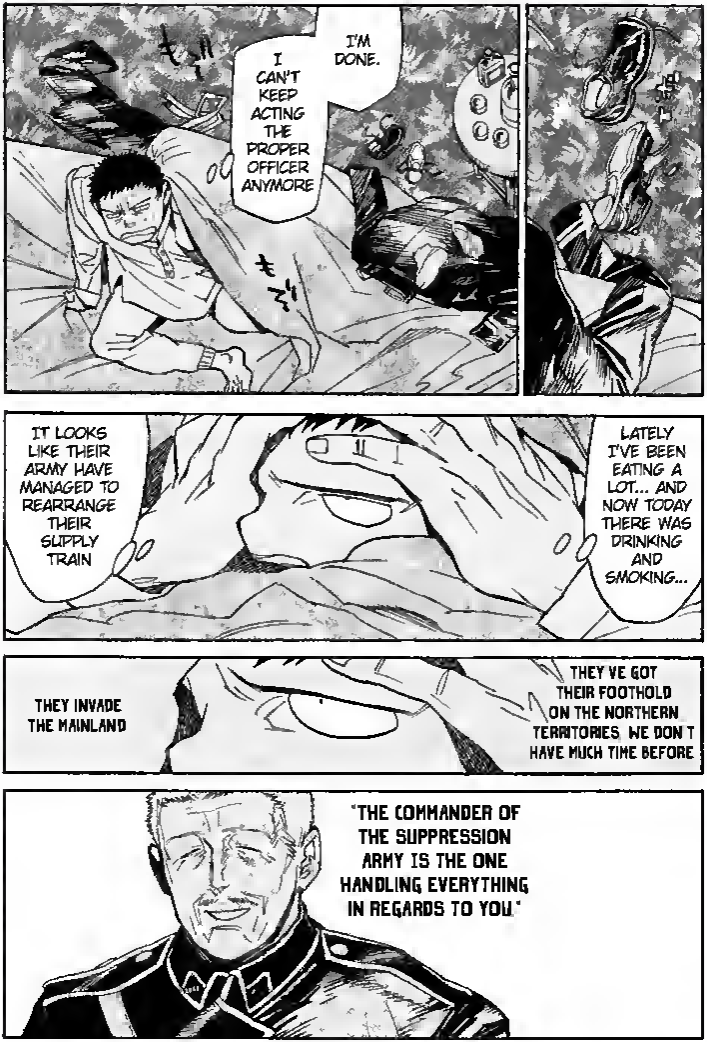
I AM LOBOV.
SERGEANT HENRI LOBOV.
YES.
I BELIEVE IT'S THE SECOND TIME I'VE SEEN YOU TODAY, SERGEANT LOBOV

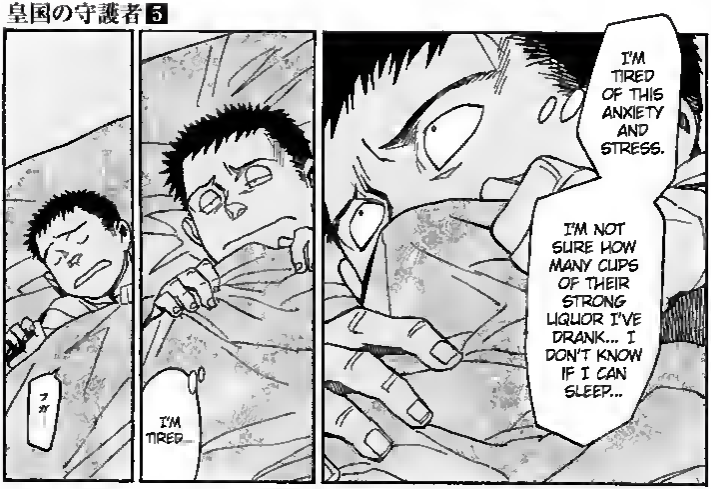

YOU'VE SPARED THE LIFE OF MY YOUNG MASTER.
I AM INDEBTED TO YOU.

AHHHH.
THAT WAS PURELY DUE TO HIS OWN GOOD LUCK
YOUNG MASTER?
CAPTAIN VON BARKHORN

IF YOU WANT TO ASK ANYTHING NOT RELATED TO OUR ARMY, FEEL FREE TO DO SO
WE MAY CALL YOU BARBARIANS, BUT I'VE BEEN TAUGHT HONOR AND RESPECT.
MY FATHER WAS A BRAVE KNIGHT WHO ONCE FOUGHT FOR THE POSITION OF LEADER OF OUR KNIGHT FAMILY AGAINST TWENTY ENEMIES, HE DEFEATED FIFTEEN MEN.
WHAT A SPLENDID FATHER!
I'M JEALOUS.
IT'S THE TRUTH!
I BELIEVE YOU, SERGEANT LUDOV.
YOU'RE A SON WHO'S VERY PROUD OF HIS FIGHT
THAT DESERVES RESPECT!

...IF YOU EVER REQUIRE SOMETHING,
I'LL DO MY BEST TO RETURN YOUR KINDNESS.
IN THAT CASE SERGEANT, FIRST YOU SHOULD HAVE A DRINK WITH ME. AFTER THAT, LET ME SLEEP ALONE FOR A BIT.
THERE'S NO NEED TO PICK UP MY CLOTHES.
YES, CAPTAIN.
IN ONE BREATH
PLEASE EXCUSE ME.


I'M DONE.
I CAN'T KEEP ACTING THE PROPER OFFICER ANYMORE
IT LOOKS LIKE THEIR ARMY HAVE MANAGED TO REARRANGE THEIR SUPPLY TRAIN
LATELY I'VE BEEN EATING A LOT... AND NOW TODAY THERE WAS DRINKING AND SMOKING...
THEY INVADE THE MAINLAND
THEY'VE GOT THEIR FOOTHOLD ON THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES. WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME BEFORE
"THE COMMANDER OF THE SUPPRESSION ARMY IS THE ONE HANDLING EVERYTHING IN REGARDS TO YOU."


I'M TIRED OF THIS ANXIETY AND STRESS.
I'M NOT SURE HOW MANY CUPS OF THEIR STRONG LIQUOR I'VE DRANK... I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN SLEEP...
I'M TIRED...
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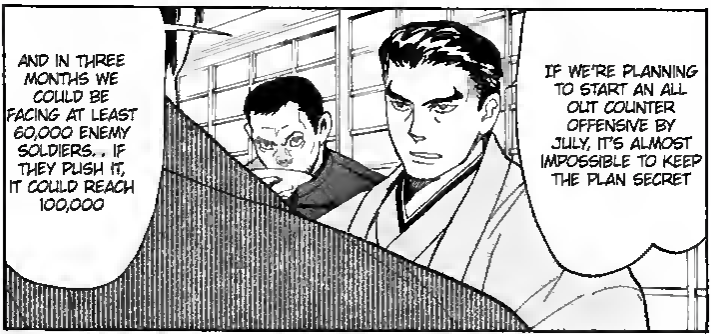
THESE ROYAL SOLDIERS CALL THEMSELVES THE "SUPPRESSION ARMY"
DURING THE LAST MONTH, THEY WERE REINFORCED WITH AT THE VERY LEAST 20,000 MORE MEN

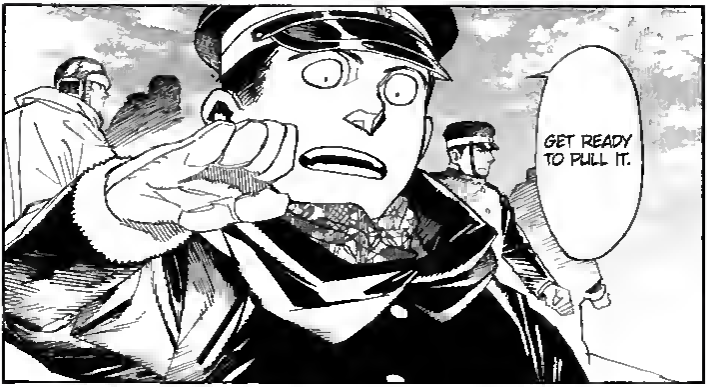

IF WE'RE PLANNING TO START AN ALL OUT COUNTER OFFENSIVE BY JULY, IT'S ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO KEEP THE PLAN SECRET
AND IN THREE MONTHS WE COULD BE FACING AT LEAST 60,000 ENEMY SOLDIERS. . IF THEY PUSH IT, IT COULD REACH 100,000

OUR CURRENT FORCES ARE AROUND 14,000 MEN TOTAL, AT LEAST 70% OF THOSE ARE FROM THE REGULAR ARMY
OUR SUPPLY ROUTES WOULD COLLAPSE.
AND OUT OF THOSE, WE WOULDN'T REALLY BE ABLE TO GATHER THEM ALL
THE GUARDS ARE DIVIDED IN THIS MATTER. THOSE RELATED TO THE FIVE RULING FAMILIES ARE IN FAVOR OF AN OFFENSIVE, WHILE THE COMMONERS ARE AGAINST IT.
AND EVERY GARRISON COMMANDER IS IN FAVOR OF ATTACKING
WITH THE EXPECTION OF THE KUSHIRO FAMILY, THE OTHER RULING FAMILIES, LED BY MORIHARA
BASED ON WHAT I COULD GATHER, THE NAVY LEADERS AND THE IMPERIAL ARMADA ARE OPPOSED AS WELL
MORE THAN HALF OF THE STAFF OFFICERS AT THE ARMY HEADQUARTERS ARE AGAINST A COUNTER OFFENSIVE

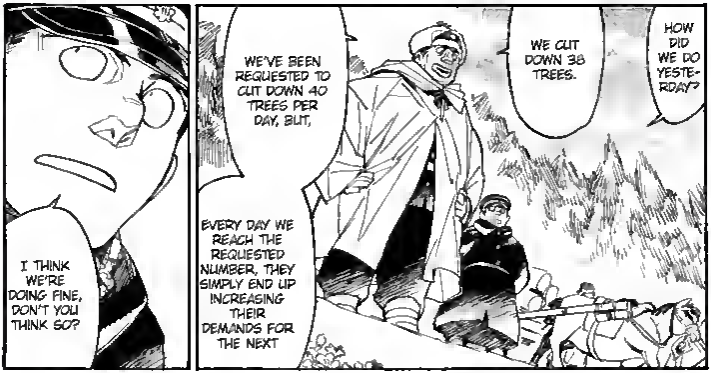
YOUR HIGHNESS, I BELIEVE OUR PRIORITY RIGHT NOW SHOULD BE ORGANIZING OUR DEFENSES
AND TO DO THAT WE FIRST NEED TO CONSOLIDATE OUR INTERNAL GOALS
YASUTANE... YOUR BROTHER IN LAW..
I'VE BEEN TOLD HE REMAINED FIGHTING ON THE REAR GUARD UNTIL HE FINALLY LOST A BATTLE.
YES.
TWENTY OF HIS SOLDIERS HAVE SURVIVED.
I AM VERY INDEBTED TO YOUR BROTHER IN LAW.
NAOE WILL RETURN ON THE FIRST SHIP ONCE PRISONER EXCHANGE BEGINS.
WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR HIM, YOUR HIGHNESS?

HE'LL BE TREATED AS A HERO, OF COURSE.
HE SAVED THE NORTHERN GARRISONS, AND MY SOLDIERS.
FROM TIME IMMEMORIAL, THOSE WHO PERFORM HEROICS ACTS ON THE BATTLEFIELD ARE TO BE HONORED IN FRONT OF A HUNDRED PEOPLE.
ONCE THAT CEREMONY IS DONE, HE WILL BE EXPECTED TO ANSWER DIRECTLY TO THE EMPEROR
IN OTHER WORDS, YOU WILL MAKE HI..

EXCATLY
IN FRONT OF ALL THE INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY, I'LL HAVE HIM PROCLAIM THAT SETTING UP A COUNTER OFFENSIVE IS NOTHING MORE THAN A WILD DELUSION
AS HE WILL ONLY BE ANSWERING TO THE EMPEROR, NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO STOP HIM
April, Northern Territories


GET READY TO PULL IT.

I THINK WE WILL BE ABLE TO DO 32, MAYBE 33 TODAY.
WITH THIS WE HAVE CUT 28 TREES.

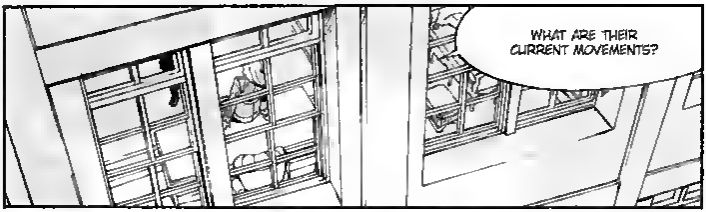

I THINK WE'RE DOING FINE, DON'T YOU THINK SO?
WE'VE BEEN REQUESTED TO CUT DOWN 40 TREES PER DAY, BUT,
EVERY DAY WE REACH THE REQUESTED NUMBER, THEY SIMPLY END UP INCREASING THEIR DEMANDS FOR THE NEXT
WE CUT DOWN 38 TREES.
HOW DID WE DO YESTE-RDAY?

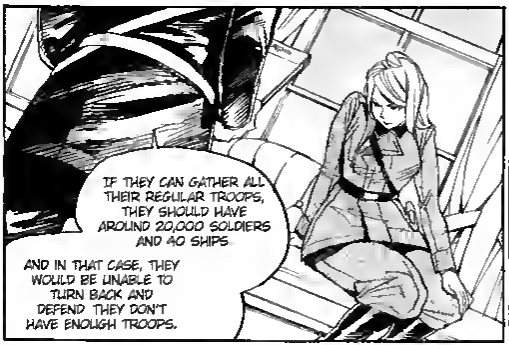
EVERY NIGHT SOMEONE VISITS US AND BRING SOME ALCOHOL.
THE ROYAL SOLDIERS ARE SLOWLY STARTING TO THINK SO TOO. ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, THEY ARE PLEASANT PEOPLE.
YOU HAVE VISITORS.
CAPTAIN SHINJO,
..WAIT, THESE ARE IMPERIAL BUREAUCRATS
CAPTAIN, HAVE YOU DONE SOMETHING BAD?

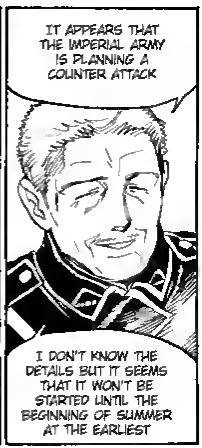
HE'S MAKING ME NERVOUS
HIS VOICE IS A BIT HOLLOW
YES.
ARE YOU CAPTAIN SHINJO NAOE? COMMANDER OF THE 11TH BATALLION OF THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS SABERTOOH SQUAD?
I AM FROM THE MINISTRY OF THE MILITARY, AND AM IN CHARGE OF MONITORING OUR PRISONERS.
WE WERE SENT HERE BY HIS MAJESTY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GRAND CODE
ハァ。
DUE TO SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, YOU ARE TO RETURN HOME ON THE FIRST SHIP.
I DO NOT KNOW THE REASON BUT THE NAVY IN PARTICULAR HAVE STRONGLY APPEALED IN YOUR FAVOR

IT HAS BEEN DECIDED THAT YOU, YOUR SUBORDINATES AND TIGERS
WILL BOARD THE SAME SHIP.
THE NAVY STATED THAT IF WE WERE TO REFUSE THIS THEY WOULD USE FORCE TO ACCOMPLISH IT.
CAPTAIN, WERE YOU BLESSED BY THE LUMINOUS BELT WHEN YOU WERE BORN OR ANYTHING OF THE SORT?
THIS KIND OF SPECIAL TREATMENT IS UNUSUAL EVEN FOR SOMEONE WHO WAS ADOPTED INTO ONE THE RULING FAMILIES

YOU SEE, I WAS RAISED BY A DIFFERENT FAMILY WHO WAS NOT MY OWN
I AM AN ORPHAN OF WAR, OFFICER.


WHAT ARE THEIR CURRENT MOVEMENTS?


IF THEY CAN GATHER ALL THEIR REGULAR TROOPS, THEY SHOULD HAVE AROUND 20,000 SOLDIERS AND 40 SHIPS.
AND IN THAT CASE, THEY WOULD BE UNABLE TO TURN BACK AND DEFEND. THEY DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TROOPS.


IT APPEARS THAT THE IMPERIAL ARMY IS PLANNING A COUNTER ATTACK.
I DON'T KNOW THE DETAILS BUT IT SEEMS THAT IT WON'T BE STARTED UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF SUMMER AT THE EARLIEST.

SO THEY WANT TO COUNTER ATTACK.

IF ALL WE NEED TO MATCH THEM IS 20,000 SOLDIERS, THEN WE'LL JUST CALL 20,000 MORE SOLDIERS AS REINFORCEMENTS.
WE'LL JUST NEED TO MEET IN BATTLE ONCE TO THROW THEM ASIDE AND CRUSH THEIR ENTIRE ARMY.

AND SO BY SPRING NEXT YEAR, WE WILL HAVE OCCUPIED THEIR ENTIRE TERRITORY

PRIN-
CESS,
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN HOW MUCH WE STRUGGLED AGAINST A SINGLE BATALLION?
AHH, THAT MAN.
I HAD GREAT HOPES FOR HIM BUT... HIS APPEARANCE IS A BIT POOR...
THAT'S TOO BAD.
WHAT A TROUBLESOME PRINCESS SHE DID ORDER HE HERSELF TO GIVE SPECIAL TREATMENT TO HIM
AN UGLY MAN IS A BIT TOO MUCH FOR ME.
PERHAPS I SHOULD HAVE FOCUSED MORE INTO TEACHING HER TO BE HONEST WITH HER FEELINGS
BUT NOW IT LOOKS LIKE SHE FORGOT IT
HE'S AN INTERESTING MAN.
A MAN'S FACE EXPOSES HIS HEART.
HIS FACE SHOWS ME HE'S TOO TIMID.
LOOKS AREN'T EVERYTHING TO A PERSON.

LOOKING AT THINGS FROM YOUR FEMININE POINT OF VIEW,
BUT YOU EVALUATE HIM HIGHLY.
PERHAPS YOU MAY BE RIGHT, PRINCESS.
YES. I DON'T WANT TO BE AROUND AN ENEMY,
BUT I COULD GET USED TO HIM.
AND THEN WIN HIM OVER AS AN ALLY.
OR PERHAPS, IF THE GRAND CODE DID NOT EXIST, EXECUTE HIM.

I WANT TO SEE WHAT'S SO FRIGHTENING ABOUT HIM
IN SECRET.
THEN I'D LIKE TO MEET HIM ONCE,
IF YOU'RE WILLING TO GO THAT FAR,
KLAUS.
MY PRINCESS
AS YOU WISH,

MASTER SCANZ

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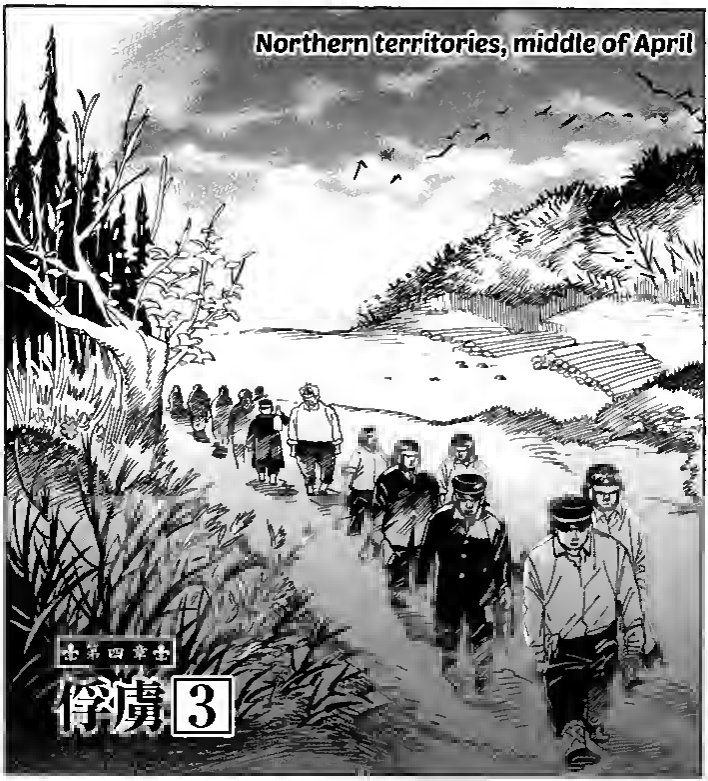
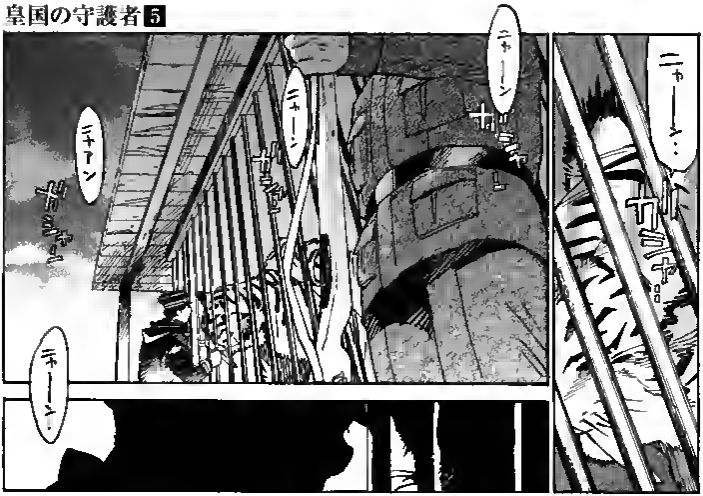
皇國の守護者


Northern territories, middle of April
第四章
俘虜3

I'VE DRUNK TOO MUCH ALREADY
DIDN'T YOU DRINK ANYTHING AT ALL?

WHOEVER WORKS THE MOST TODAY WILL GET THAT LIQUOR AS A REWARD
ANYWAY, SOME ROYAL SOLDIERS SENT THOSE TWO DAYS AGO
OF COURSE THAT'S JUST A PRETEXT. AFTERWARDS, WE'LL DIVIDE IT EQUALLY BETWEEN EVERYONE
AHH, I SEE. IN THAT CASE, YOU HOLD ON TO IT
I'M GRATEFUL, SIR!
REALLY?! THAT MAKES ME HAPPY, SIR.
THAT MEANS I AM NOMINATING YOU!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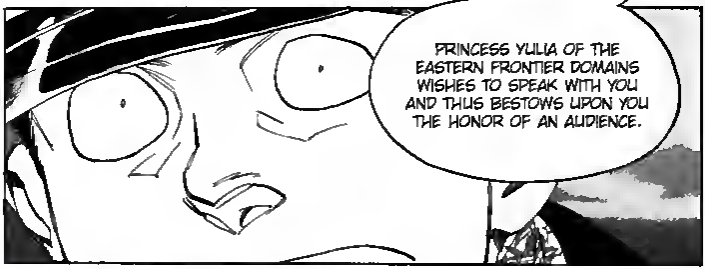
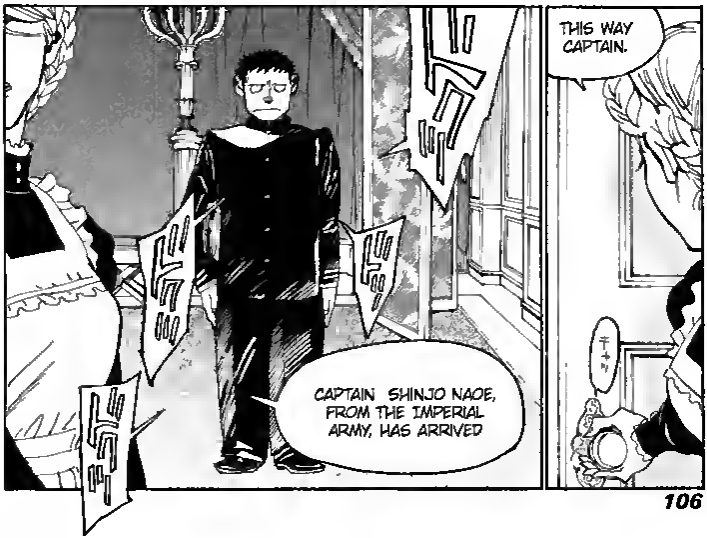
TODAY IT'S TWO BOTTLES OF LIQUOR AND SOME SWEETS!
THESE WERE SENT TO YOU, SO TAKE THEM
THOSE WHO CAN'T DRINK ALCOHOL WILL BE GIVEN PRIORITY WHEN WE DISTRIBUTE THE CANDY

BUT I REALLY LOVE CANDIES AND ALCOHOL...
DON'T BE IMPUDENT, SERGEANT MAJOR
IT HAS BEEN DECIDED THAT TODAY IS YOUR LAST DAY OF FORCED LABOUR
UNTIL YOU ARE RELEASED, PLEASE MAKE ALL ARRANGE-MENTS FOR YOUR RETURN HOME

A... AND ALSO... CAPTAIN SHINJO,


PRINCESS YULIA OF THE EASTERN FRONTIER DOMAINS WISHES TO SPEAK WITH YOU AND THUS BESTOWS UPON YOU THE HONOR OF AN AUDIENCE.


THIS WAY CAPTAIN.
CAPTAIN SHINJO NAOE, FROM THE IMPERIAL ARMY, HAS ARRIVED

AS PER YOUR REQUEST, I, CAPTAIN SHINJO NAOE OF THE IMPERIAL ARMY, HAVE ARRIVED.
I AM EXTREMELY DELIGHTED AND HONORED TO KNOW THAT YOU WISH TO SPEAK ME AND THUS GRANTED ME THIS AUDIENCE.
……
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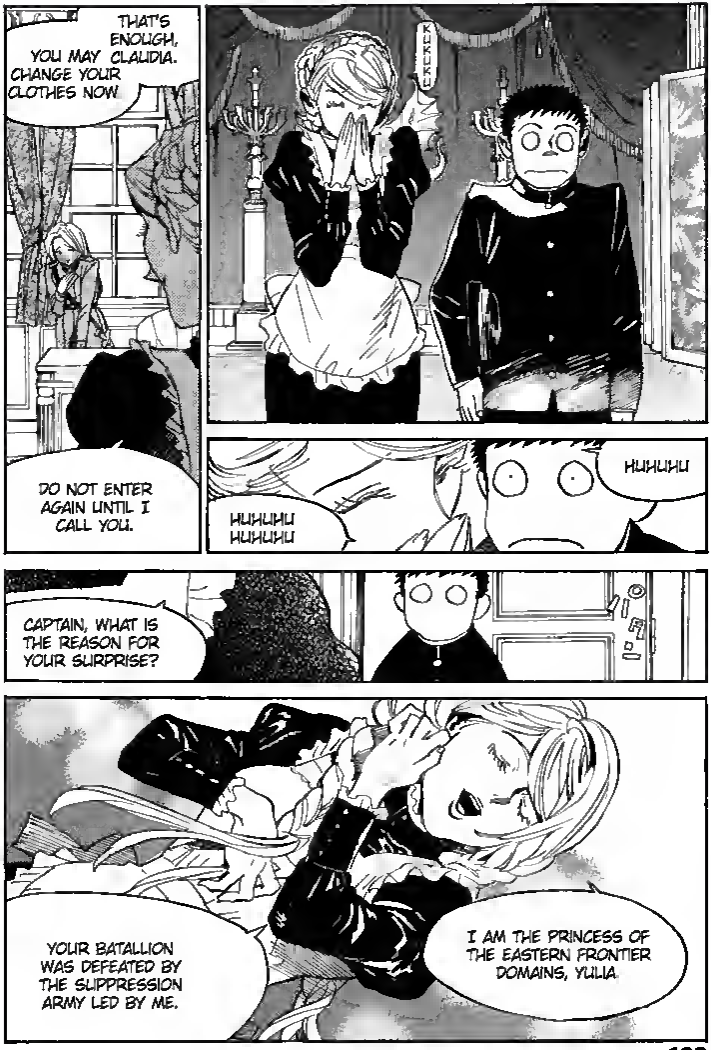
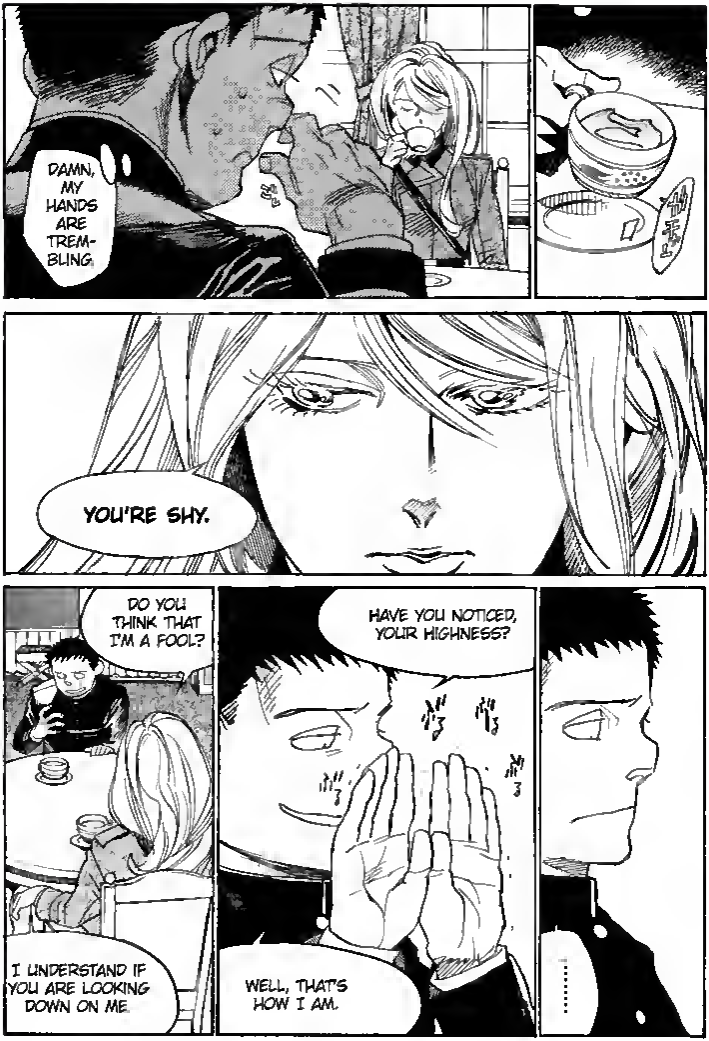
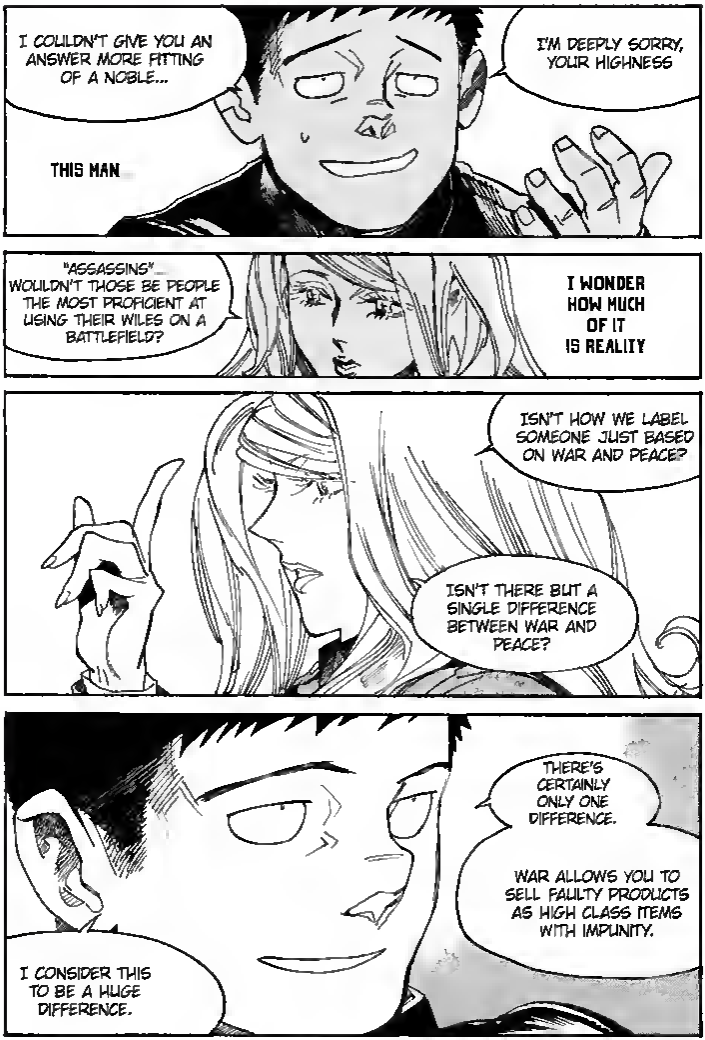

THAT'S ENOUGH, CLAUDIA. YOU MAY CHANGE YOUR CLOTHES NOW.
DO NOT ENTER AGAIN UNTIL I CALL YOU.
GUKUK
HUHUHU
HUHUHU HUHUHU
CAPTAIN, WHAT IS THE REASON FOR YOUR SURPRISE?
YOUR BATALLION WAS DEFEATED BY THE SUPPRESSION ARMY LED BY ME.
I AM THE PRINCESS OF THE EASTERN FRONTIER DOMAINS, YULIA.

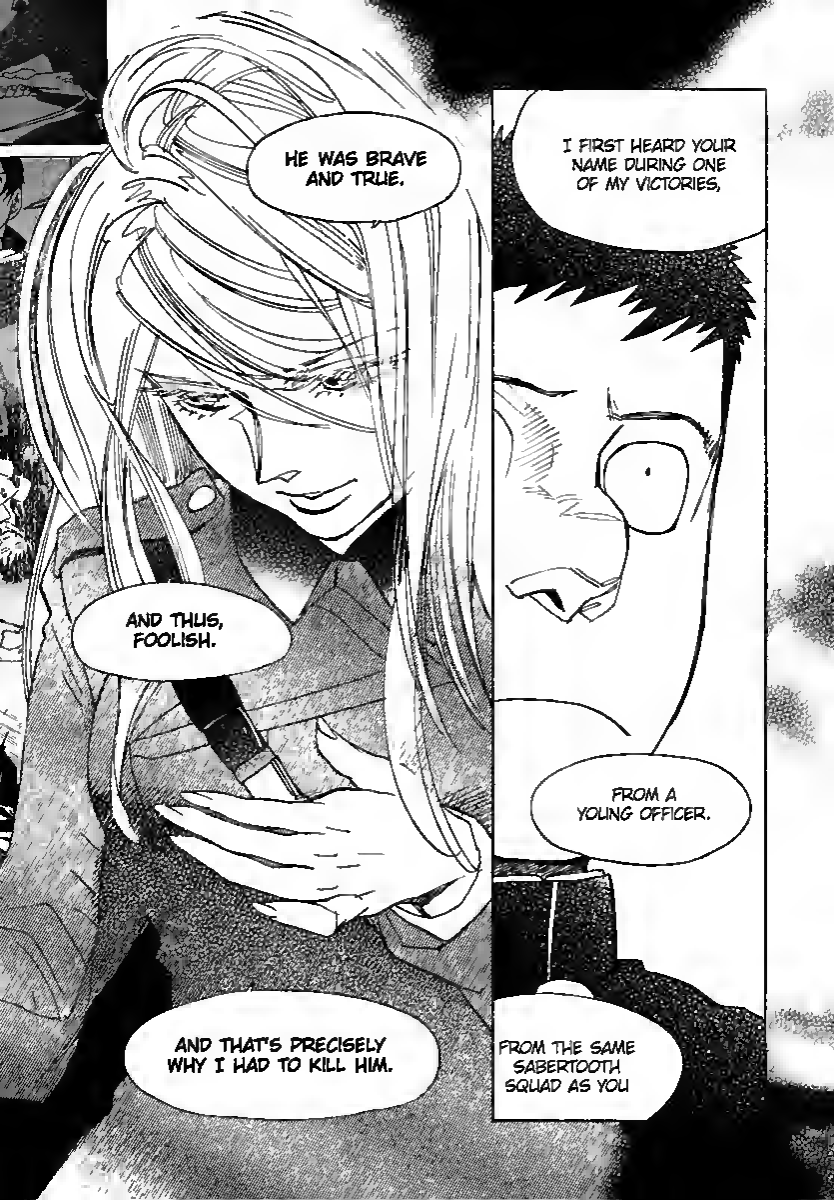
MY NAME IS SHINJO.
IT SEEMS,
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I WAS ABLE TO CATCH YOU OFF GUARD.
I CAN CERTAINLY UNDERSTAND YOUR FEELINGS, YOUR HIGHNESS
I BY NO MEANS DISLIKE FORMALITIES, BUT I END UP TIRING OF ALWAYS BEING FORMAL.
I PLAY LITTLE PRANKS LIKE THIS SOMETIMES.


DAMN, MY HANDS ARE TREMBLING.
YOU'RE SHY.
DO YOU THINK THAT I'M A FOOL?
I UNDERSTAND IF YOU ARE LOOKING DOWN ON ME.
HAVE YOU NOTICED, YOUR HIGHNESS?
WELL, THAT'S HOW I AM.

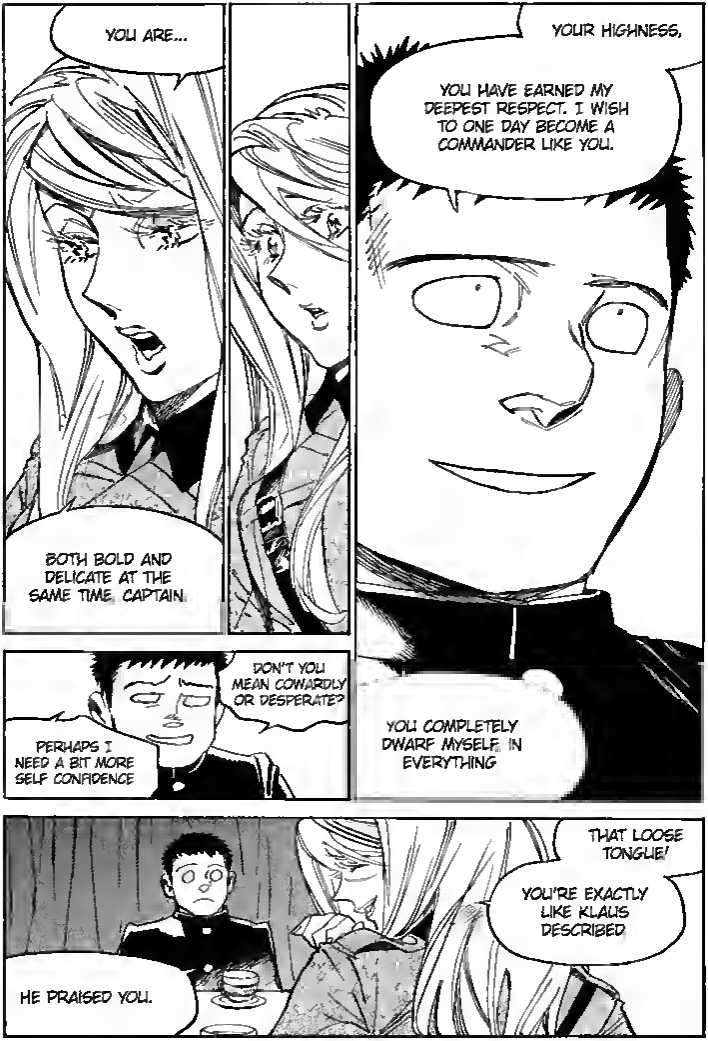
.. WELL... IF YOU SAY SO...
EVEN IF YOU DID, NOTHING WOULD EVER COME OF IT
IT'S NATURAL FOR A MAN TO DO SO
BUT HONESTLY,
I DON'T REALLY FIND ANYTHING ATTRACTIVE ABOUT YOU, AS A MAN.
YOU'RE SPEAKING TOO SOON.
THINGS ARE DIFFERENT WHEN IT COMES TO YOU AS AN OFFICER.
YOU'VE MANAGED TO STOP MY ENTIRE ARMY WITH ONLY 600 SOLDIERS REMAINING IN YOUR BATALLION
BUT IN THE END, DUE TO OUR NUMBERS, WE HAD TO USE UNDERHANDED TACTICS, LIKE SOME LOWLY ASSASSINS.
WELL,
THAT WAS DEFINITELY A DECISION I TOOK ON MY OWN ACCORD.

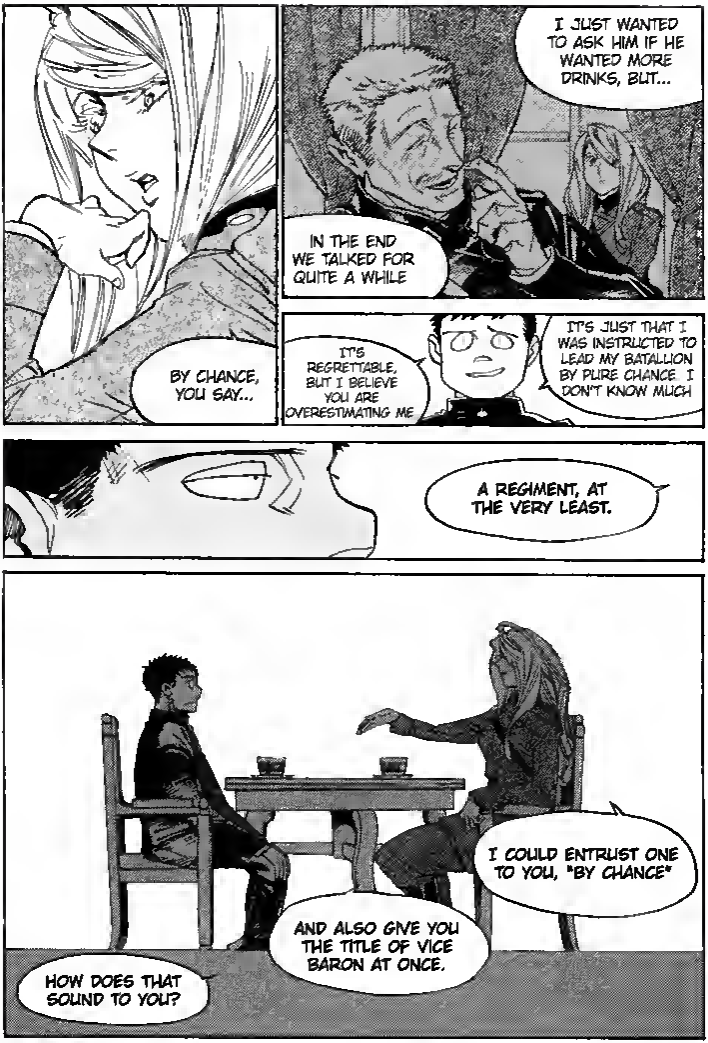

I COULDN'T GIVE YOU AN ANSWER MORE FITTING OF A NOBLE...
I'M DEEPLY SORRY, YOUR HIGHNESS
THIS MAN
"ASSASSINS"... WOULDN'T THOSE BE PEOPLE THE MOST PROFICIENT AT USING THEIR WILES ON A BATTLEFIELD?
I WONDER HOW MUCH OF IT IS REALITY
ISN'T HOW WE LABEL SOMEONE JUST BASED ON WAR AND PEACE?
ISN'T THERE BUT A SINGLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WAR AND PEACE?
THERE'S CERTAINLY ONLY ONE DIFFERENCE.
WAR ALLOWS YOU TO SELL FAULTY PRODUCTS AS HIGH CLASS ITEMS WITH IMPUNITY.
I CONSIDER THIS TO BE A HUGE DIFFERENCE.

IF THAT IS SO, THEN YOU ARE A VERY SKILLED MERCHANT, CAPTAIN
YOU SHOULD AT LEAST BE ABLE TO OPEN A LARGER STORE BY NOW
OF COURSE YOU ARE,
THAT'S WHY I AM PRAISING YOU.
HEH SO THE REASON SHE CALLED ME HERE IS
I WONDER IF I'M REALLY WORTHY OF SUCH PRAISE, YOUR HIGHNESS


I FIRST HEARD YOUR NAME DURING ONE OF MY VICTORIES,
FROM A YOUNG OFFICER.
FROM THE SAME SABERTOOTH SQUAD AS YOU
AND THAT'S PRECISELY WHY I HAD TO KILL HIM.
HE WAS BRAVE AND TRUE.
AND THUS, FOOLISH.

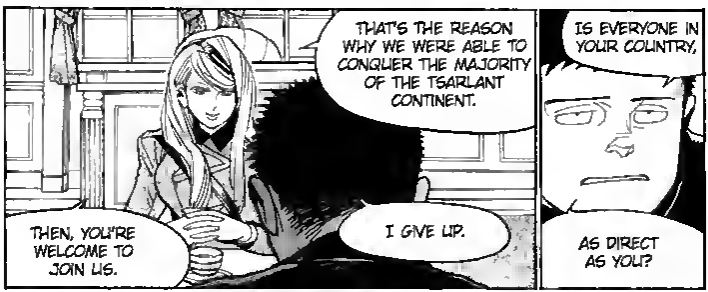
TELL ME,
DID HE SUFFER?
隕鉄!!
DO I LOOK LIKE THE KIND OF PERSON WHO WOULD ENJOY TORMETING SUCH A WONDERFUL, YOUNG MAN? ME?!
THAT OFFICER?

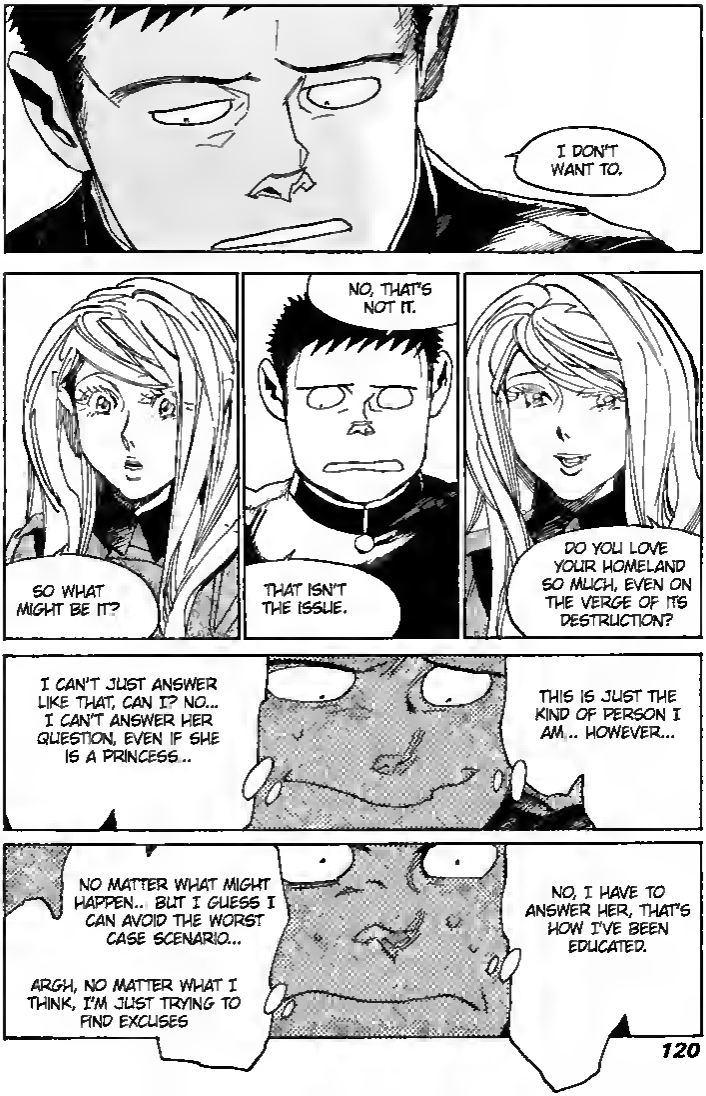

YOU ARE...
BOTH BOLD AND DELICATE AT THE SAME TIME, CAPTAIN.
YOUR HIGHNESS,
YOU HAVE EARNED MY DEEPEST RESPECT. I WISH TO ONE DAY BECOME A COMMANDER LIKE YOU.
YOU COMPLETELY DWARF MYSELF IN EVERYTHING
DON'T YOU MEAN COWARDLY OR DESPERATE?
PERHAPS I NEED A BIT MORE SELF CONFIDENCE
THAT LOOSE TONGUE!
YOU'RE EXACTLY LIKE KLAUS DESCRIBED
HE PRAISED YOU.


I JUST WANTED TO ASK HIM IF HE WANTED MORE DRINKS, BUT...
IN THE END WE TALKED FOR QUITE A WHILE
BY CHANCE, YOU SAY...
IT'S REGRETTABLE, BUT I BELIEVE YOU ARE OVERESTIMATING ME
IT'S JUST THAT I WAS INSTRUCTED TO LEAD MY BATALLION BY PURE CHANCE. I DON'T KNOW MUCH
A REGIMENT, AT THE VERY LEAST.
I COULD ENTRUST ONE TO YOU, "BY CHANCE"
AND ALSO GIVE YOU THE TITLE OF VICE BARON AT ONCE.
HOW DOES THAT SOUND TO YOU?

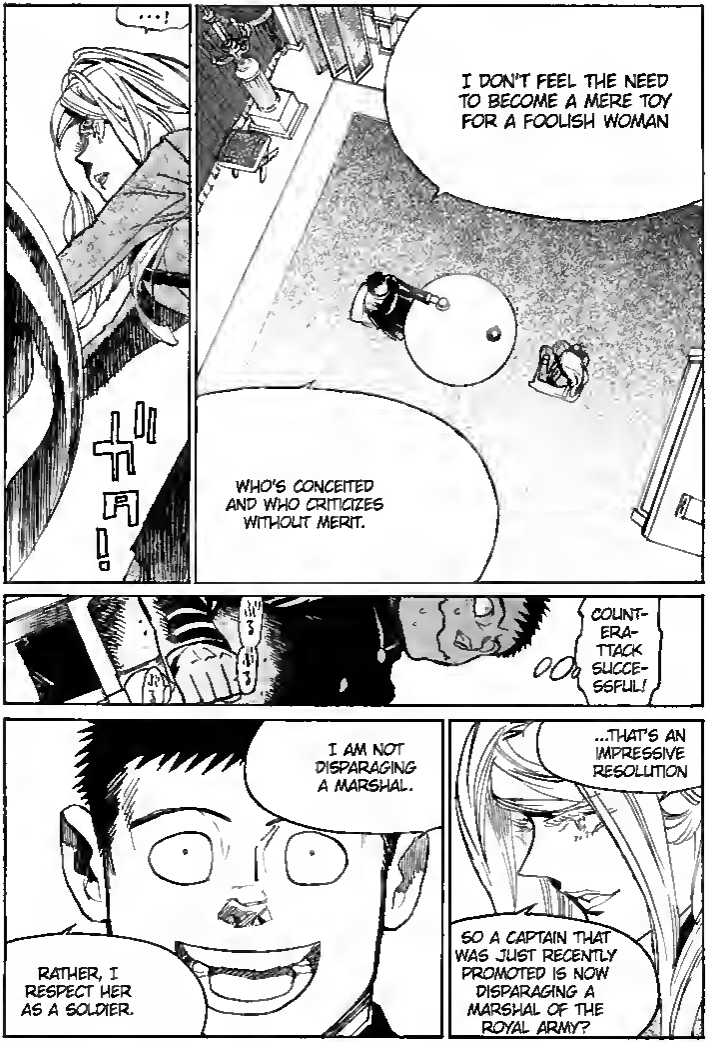
...THAT SOUNDS REALLY GOOD.
AN OUTSIDER AND TRAITOR.
I WONDER IF THEY REALLY WOULD ACCEPT THAT KIND OF PERSON AMONGST THEM.
OF COURSE!
I AM CERTAIN OF THAT.
I BELIEVE EVERYONE FROM MY CAMP WOULD REJOICE BY HAVING YOU JOIN THEM.
AT LEAST SIX PERCENT OF THE NOBLEMEN FROM THE EASTERN FRONTIER ARE BARBARIANS THAT HAVE CHANGED SIDES.
HAVING ONE MORE JOIN IS BARELY WORTH GOSSIPING.
MOREOVER, YOU WILL BE BACKED BY THE PRINCESS HERSELF.

IF THE NEED ARISES,
YOU COULD EVEN BE MY LOVER, AT LEAST ON PAPER.
I'M SORRY, BUT IT WILL BE ONLY ON PAPER...
THEY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO COMPLAIN.
THANKS TO MY UNCLE IN THE CAPITAL... HIS MAJESTY GEORGE THE THIRD.


THAT'S THE REASON WHY WE WERE ABLE TO CONQUER THE MAJORITY OF THE TSARLANT CONTINENT.
I GIVE UP.
THEN, YOU'RE WELCOME TO JOIN US.
IS EVERYONE IN YOUR COUNTRY,
AS DIRECT AS YOU?


I DON'T WANT TO.
NO, THAT'S NOT IT.
SO WHAT MIGHT BE IT?
THAT ISN'T THE ISSUE.
DO YOU LOVE YOUR HOMELAND SO MUCH, EVEN ON THE VERGE OF ITS DESTRUCTION?
I CAN'T JUST ANSWER LIKE THAT, CAN I? NO... I CAN'T ANSWER HER QUESTION, EVEN IF SHE IS A PRINCESS..
THIS IS JUST THE KIND OF PERSON I AM... HOWEVER...
NO MATTER WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN.. BUT I GUESS I CAN AVOID THE WORST CASE SCENARIO...
ARGH, NO MATTER WHAT I THINK, I'M JUST TRYING TO FIND EXCUSES
NO, I HAVE TO ANSWER HER, THAT'S HOW I'VE BEEN EDUCATED.

I DON'T MIND BEING TREATED WITH DISDAIN, SCORN, OR MADE A FOOL OF.
HOWEVER,
I WON'T TOLERATE BEING UNDERESTIMATED.
...YOU SAID TO MY FACE THAT I WAS UNNATRACTIVE AS A MAN. THAT WAS TOO CRUEL.
EVEN IF IT'S THE TRUTH.
YES, YOUR HIGHNESS, I'M TIMID.
BUT,
YOU'RE STILL BEING SHY...

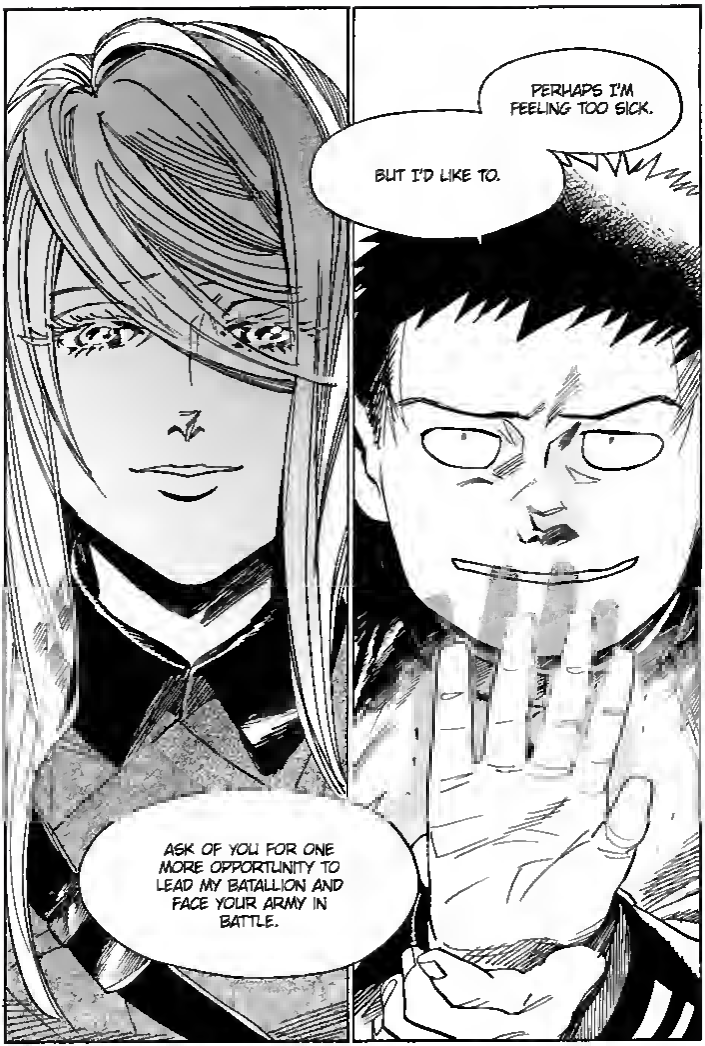

...!
I DON'T FEEL THE NEED TO BECOME A MERE TOY FOR A FOOLISH WOMAN
WHO'S CONCEITED AND WHO CRITICIZES WITHOUT MERIT.
COUNTER-ATTACK SUCCESSFUL!
I AM NOT DISPARAGING A MARSHAL.
RATHER, I RESPECT HER AS A SOLDIER.
...THAT'S AN IMPRESSIVE RESOLUTION
SO A CAPTAIN THAT WAS JUST RECENTLY PROMOTED IS NOW DISPARAGING A MARSHAL OF THE ROYAL ARMY?

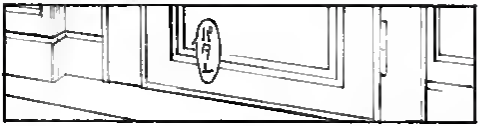
...AS A SOLDIER? I SEE...
WHEN IT COMES TO MILITARY AFFAIRS, YOU SUDDENLY BECOME BRAVE?

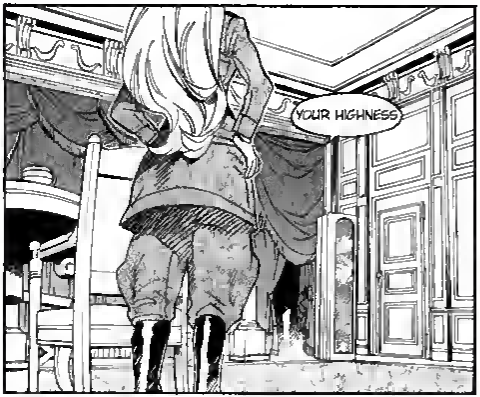
WELL, WELL... IN THIS LOCATION,
MY SAFETY IS GUARANTEED BY THE GRAND CODE.

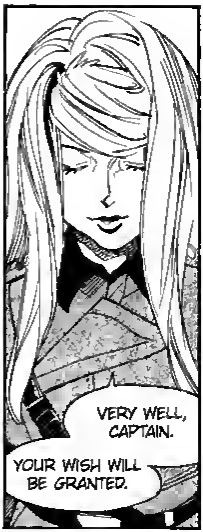
"YOU'VE TALKED ME DOWN"
"AND I'M TRULY FRIGHTENED BY YOU"
YOU'RE LETTING ME SEE YOUR TREMBLING HAND, SO WE CAN BOTH KEEP OUR HONOR

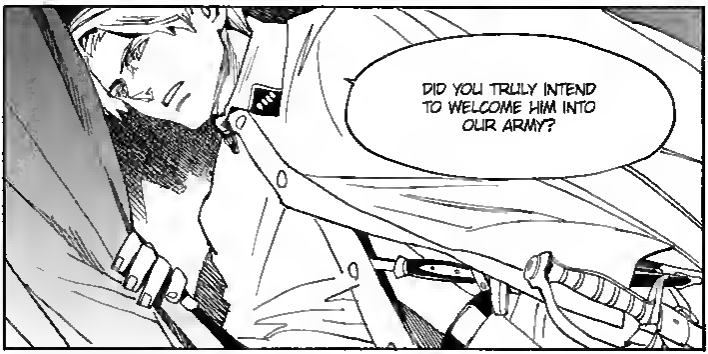
YOU RE QUITTING WHILE YOU ARE AHEAD.
...WHATEVER HAPPENS FROM NOW ON, I WONDER IF YOUR HAND WILL GET BETTER.


PERHAPS I'M FEELING TOO SICK.
BUT I'D LIKE TO.
ASK OF YOU FOR ONE MORE OPPORTUNITY TO LEAD MY BATALLION AND FACE YOUR ARMY IN BATTLE.

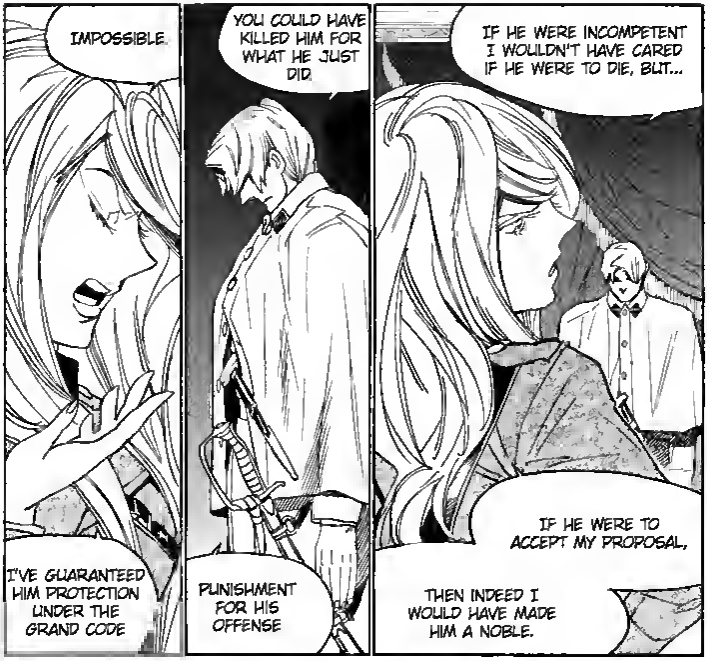

IRAL

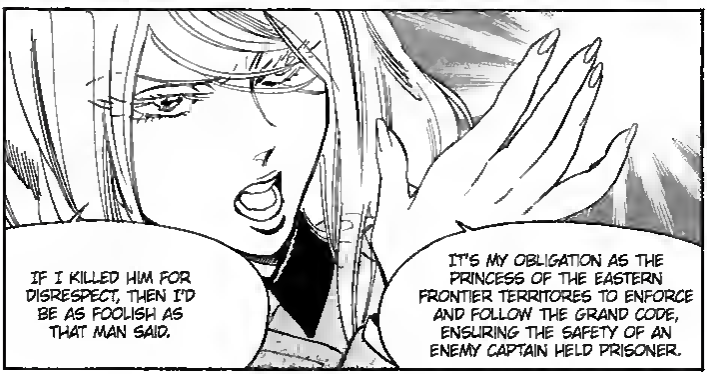

YOUR HIGHNESS


VERY WELL, CAPTAIN.
YOUR WISH WILL BE GRANTED.

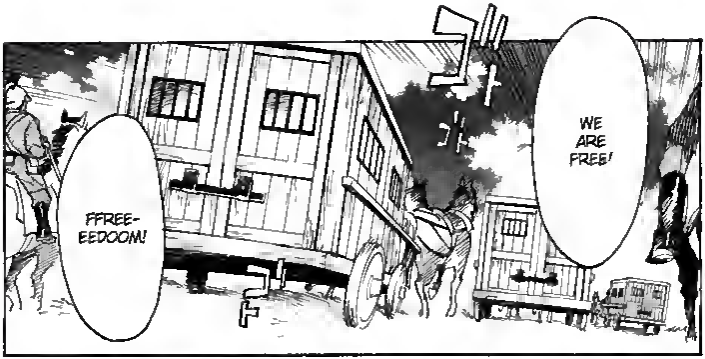

DID YOU TRULY INTEND TO WELCOME HIM INTO OUR ARMY?

OF COURSE.


IMPOSSIBLE
I'VE GUARANTEED HIM PROTECTION UNDER THE GRAND CODE
YOU COULD HAVE KILLED HIM FOR WHAT HE JUST DID
PUNISHMENT FOR HIS OFFENSE
IF HE WERE INCOMPETENT I WOULDN'T HAVE CARED IF HE WERE TO DIE, BUT...
IF HE WERE TO ACCEPT MY PROPOSAL,
THEN INDEED I WOULD HAVE MADE HIM A NOBLE.


IF I KILLED HIM FOR DISRESPECT, THEN I'D BE AS FOOLISH AS THAT MAN SAID.
IT'S MY OBLIGATION AS THE PRINCESS OF THE EASTERN FRONTIER TERRITORES TO ENFORCE AND FOLLOW THE GRAND CODE, ENSURING THE SAFETY OF AN ENEMY CAPTAIN HELD PRISONER.

I SEE.
I AM CERTAIN HE WON'T BE ABLE TO GET IN OUR WAY AGAIN.
YOUR HIGHNESS INDEED, THAT MAN IS SKILLED WHEN IT COMES TO THE BATTLEFIELD.
HOWEVER,
HE'S JUST A CAPTAIN FROM THAT BARBARIAN COUNTRY. NOTHING MORE.
NEVERTHELESS, IT'S TRULY REGRETTABLE.
THAT MAN SHOWED SO MUCH SKILL WHILE COMMANDING A SINGLE BATALLION...
I TRULY WANTED TO HAVE HIM AS MY PAWN.
AS YOU WILL.


WE ARE FREE!
FFREE-EEDOOM!

AS PROOF OF MY RESPECT FOR THE GRAND CODE
"IT'S TOO BAD..."
I'LL TELL YOU SOMETHING

ME AND MY BATALLION WILL BE ESCORTED TO THE HARBOR TOMORROW
WE WON'T HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE TO TALK LIKE THIS
YOU WILL REGRET THIS.
UNTIL I DESTROY YOUR COUNTRY, YOU ABSOLUTELY MUST SURVIVE.
AND ONCE YOUR COUNTRY IS IN RUINS
I WONDER ABOUT THAT.

I WILL BE SURE TO SHOW YOU.
THAT THERE ARE MANY CASES WHERE THE GRAND CODE DOES NOT APPLY TO YOUR FELLOW COUNTRYMAN.
I AM REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO IT.

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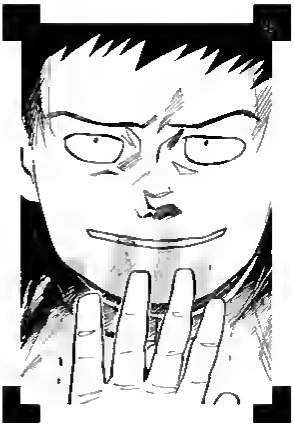
QC: JAC

皇国の守護者



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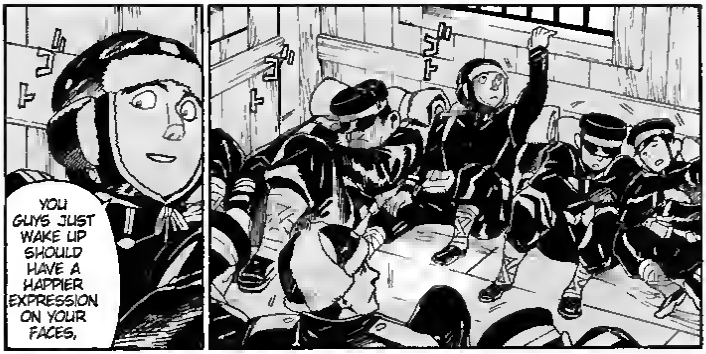
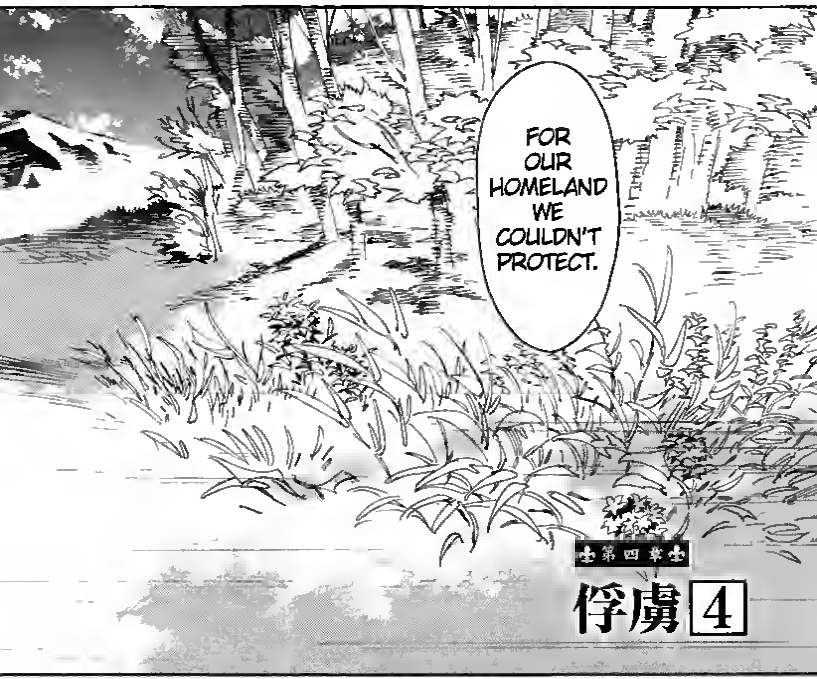
WHAT DO I DO NOW?
MY BUTT IS STARTING TO HURT
SLEEP.
THE PRISONER EXCHANGE WILL BE AT MAMURO, AND IT'S AT LEAST ONE MORE DAY OF TRAVEL FROM HERE.


YOU GUYS JUST WAKE UP SHOULD HAVE A HAPPIER EXPRESSION ON YOUR FACES.

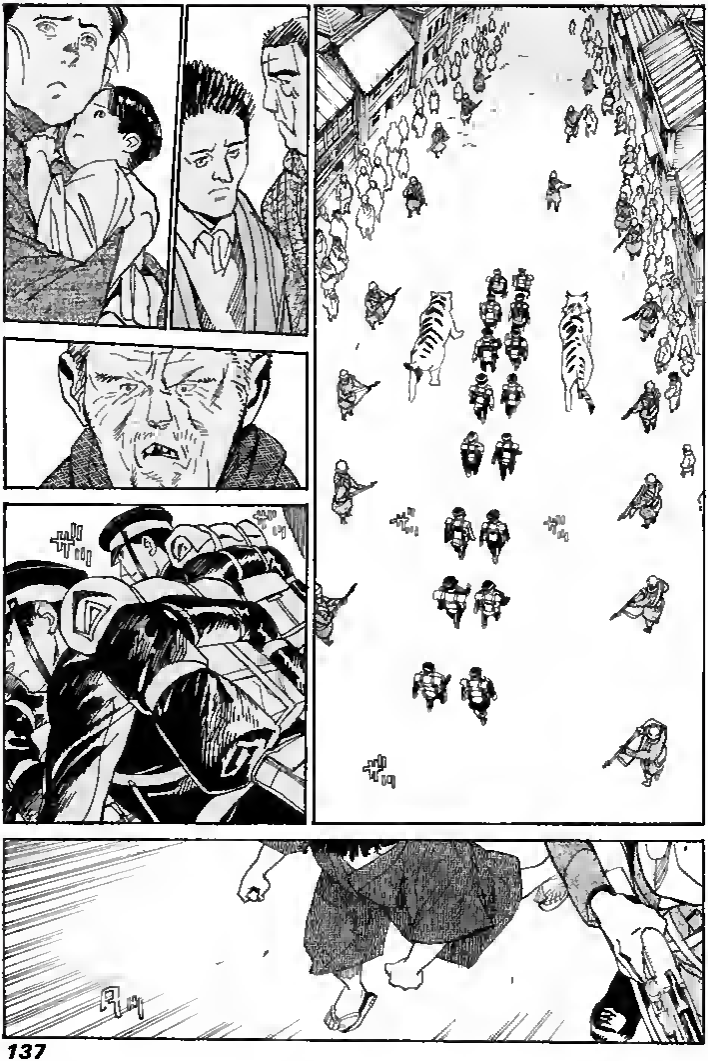

FOR OUR HOMELAND WE COULDN'T PROTECT.

第四章

俘虜 4

WE'RE RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF SPRING! WHAT A GREAT VIEW!
YOU GUYS SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE THIS!?

UNTIL WE REACH THE PORT, WE NEED TO APPEAR PROUD
WALK IN AN ORDERLY LINE.
Suburbs of Mamuro
BEFORE WE GET TO THE CITY, GET YOUR CLOTHES IN ORDER



YOU LOSERS!

COW-
ARDS!
LOSERS!
I....
YOU THINK YOU CAN ESCAPE, ABANDONING YOUR LAND AND PEOPLE, AND THEN RETURN?
WHY COULDN'T YOU DIE VALIANTLY?!
SICKLY COW-
ARDS!

HOW IRONIC
THANK YOU.

SERGEANT MAJOR, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE GOTTEN HURT SINCE LOSING THE BATTLE.
OR DO YOU INTEND TO BRING EVEN MORE SHAME TO ME?
FIX UP OUR FORMATION!

CHIHAYA!
NO, CHIHAYA.
...
!!ヤ~

FORWARD MARCH!
ALL MEN, IN FORM-ATION!

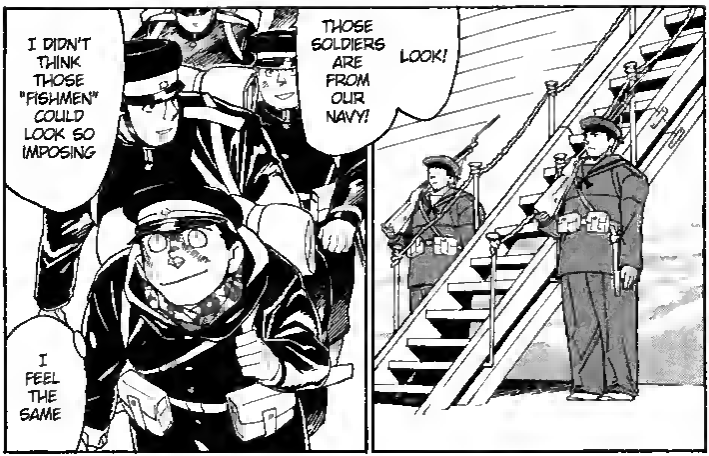
WE MUST FACE REALITY IN THE BEST WAY WE CAN
ARE YOU OKAY WITH THIS?

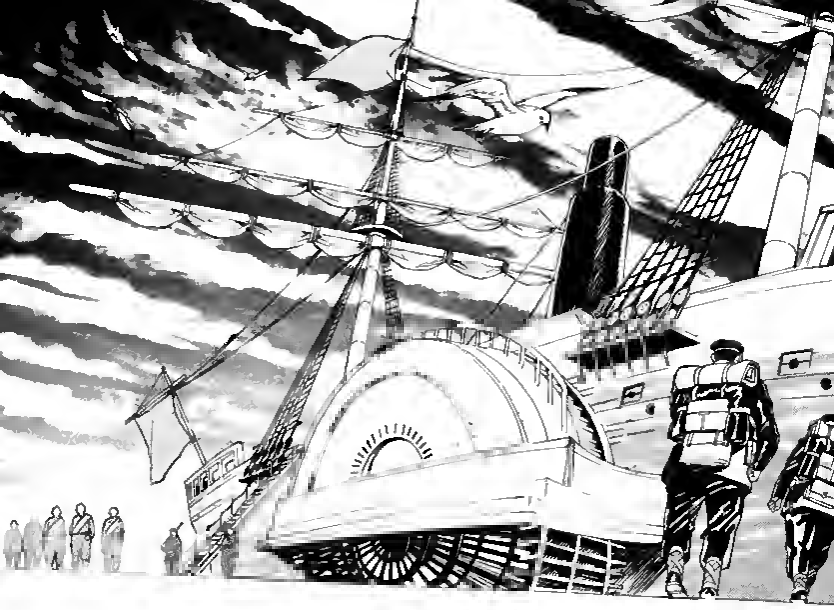
BUT I REMEMBER.
THESE PEOPLE DON'T KNOW THAT.
!!!
I REQUEST,
FOR YOU TO BOMBARD THE GRANARY AT MAMURO

Mamuro Harbor

YEAH...
SO THIS IS WHAT WE GET AFTER ALL THE FIGHTING

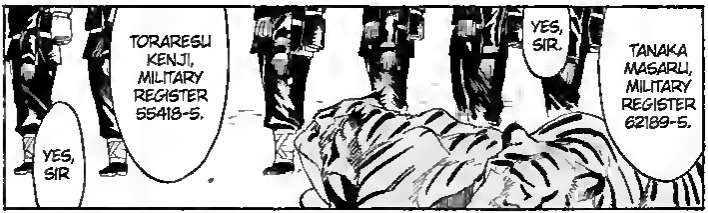
SO DAMN STINKY! DID THEY THROW HORSESHIT AT YOU??
THEY DID THE SAME TO YOU...


I DIDN'T THINK THOSE "FISHMEN" COULD LOOK SO IMPOSING
I FEEL THE SAME
THOSE SOLDIERS ARE FROM OUR NAVY!
LOOK!

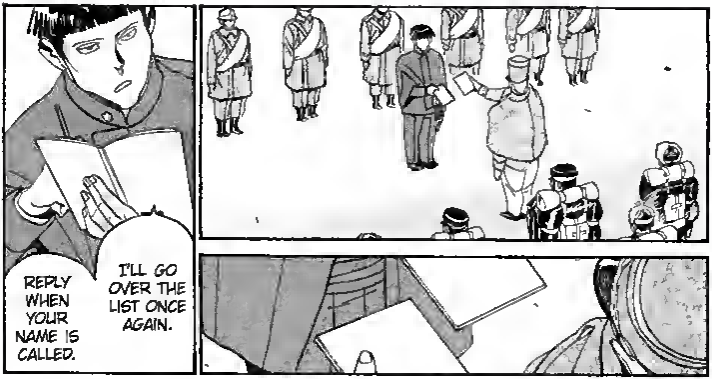


IN CONFIRMING YOUR NAMES IN THIS REGISTER
SHINJO NAOE, MILITARY REGISTER 44072-5.

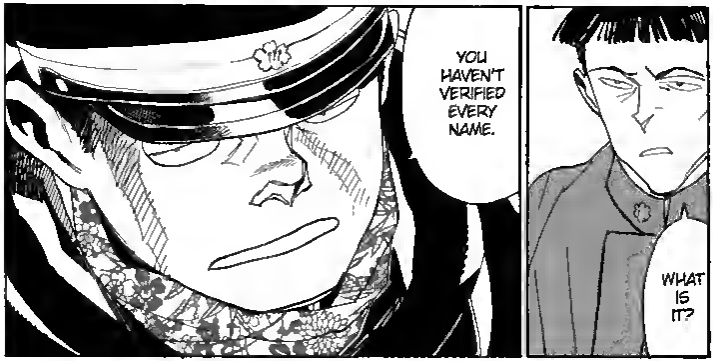
YES, SIR.


TANAKA MASARU, MILITARY REGISTER 62189-S.
YES, SIR.
TORARESU KENJI, MILITARY REGISTER 55418-S.
YES, SIR

SABER-TOOTH TIGER, OUGO.
SABER-TOOTH TIGER, CHIHAYA.
ナー


I'LL GO OVER THE LIST ONCE AGAIN.
REPLY WHEN YOUR NAME IS CALLED.

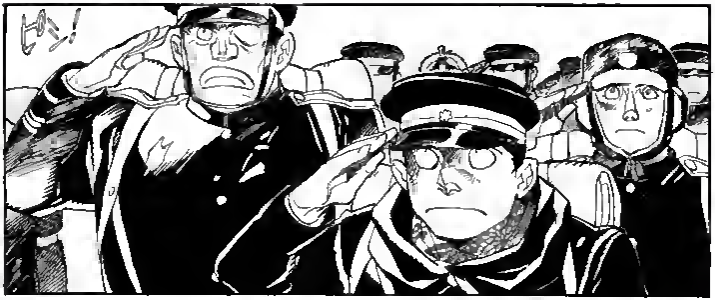
EXCUSE ME, OFFICER.
WE'RE FINISHED
...EVERYTHING CHECKS OUT WITH THE REGISTER.


YOU HAVEN'T VERIFIED EVERY NAME.
WHAT IS IT?

WHOSE NAMES YOU SHOULD CONFIRM ONCE MORE.
THERE ARE TWO MORE,
HUH... THESE BEASTS?

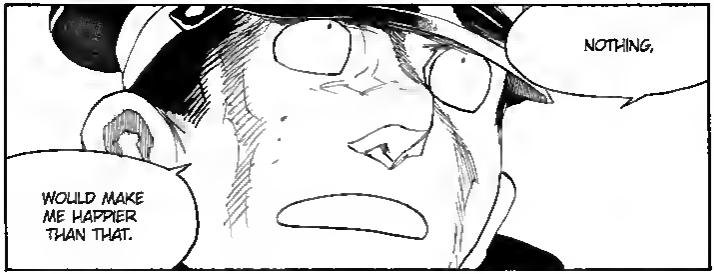
AHHH... WELL, I'M TRULY SORRY.
I FORGOT THEM.
EHHHH... SABER-TOOTH TIGER, OUGO.
SABER-TOOTH TIGER, CHIHAYA.
ニアウ
AND WITH THIS, WE HAVE NOW COMPLETED THE PROCEDURES,
FOR THE PRISONER EXCHANGE BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES.

OF COURSE, AS ONE OF YOUR ENEMIES,
I AM LOOKING FORWARD FOR ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO FACE YOU ONCE MORE.
YOU HAVE CARRIED OUT YOUR DUTY BRILLIANTLY.
THERE IS NO GREATER HONOR THAN THIS.
IN THIS MOMENT, THERE IS JUST ONE THING I WISH TO SAY TO YOU.
DESPITE OUR OPPOSING IDEALS,
CONGRATULATIONS
MY COMRADES IN ARMS!
AND GOOD LUCK,
GOODBYE,


ビシ!

I WAS AFRAID THIS COULD BE A BIT INCOVENIENT, BUT WE CAME TO SEND YOU OFF
I AM THANKFUL FOR THAT, KNIGHT CAPTAIN BARKHORN.
IT'S REGRETTABLE,
BUT I DON'T BELIEVE THIS WAR WILL END SO EASILY.
AND YOU TOO, ANDREI LOBOV.
PLEASE CONTINUE TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUR COMMANDER.

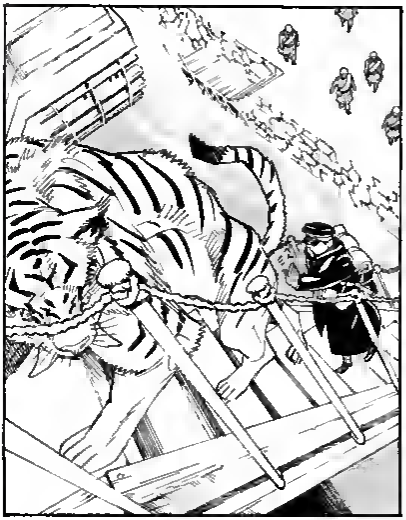
I PRAY FOR YOUR GOOD LUCK
IF THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK SHOULD BE DONE
THEN I WANT YOU TO PRAY FOR MY GOOD LUCK,
AFTER DOING THE SAME FOR CAPTAIN VON BARKHORN.

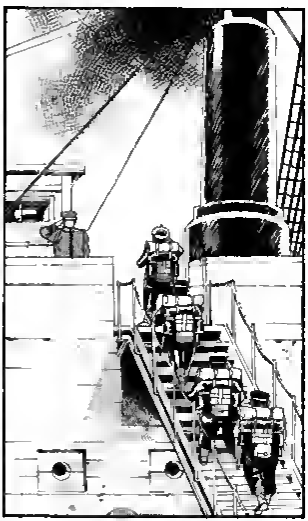

NOTHING,
WOULD MAKE ME HAPPIER THAN THAT.

I AM GRATEFUL FOR EVERYTHING, CAPTAIN SHINJO!
I VOW TO YOU THAT I SHALL DO AS YOU SAY!
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, YOU ALSO ENDED UP HELPING ME.
YOU HAVE MY THANKS.
I WAS SAVED BY YOU
WHATEVER I DID DOES NOT COMPARE TO THAT

WELL THEN, FAREWELL FOR NOW.
WHAT'S SAID IN YOUR COUNTRY IN THIS KIND OF SITUATION?
ヒロィィー!!
ヒロィ
"TO AN HONORABLE AND DISTINGUISHED ENEMY"
ALTHOUGH AT THIS POINT THAT KIND OF PRAISE MAY BE TRUE.
..I'M NOT TOO SURE ABOUT BEING DISTINGUISHED

I THINK THE SAME,
CAPTAIN SHINJO.
BUT WHEN IT COMES TO BEING AN "HONORABLE" ENEMY OR NOT,
EVERYONE DESERVES TO BE TOLD THAT.
THAT IS WHAT I BELIEVE.





I AM CAPTAIN SHINJO NAOE, COMMANDER OF THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS SABERTOOTH SQUAD 11TH BATALLION. I REQUEST PERMISSION TO EMBARK ON THIS BATTLESHIP.
YOU HAVE PERMISSION TO JOIN THE IMPERIAL WARSHIP UNEHAMA
"THE 11TH BATALLION ARE TO RECEIVE A WARM RECEPTION AND BE TREATED WITH HONOR AND RESPECT"
THESE ARE THE INSTRUCTIONS WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM OUR CAPTAIN
GOOD WORK, EVERYONE.
WELCOME BACK.

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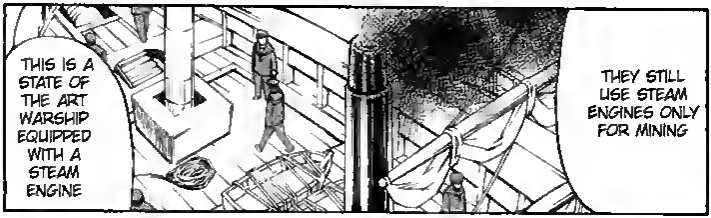
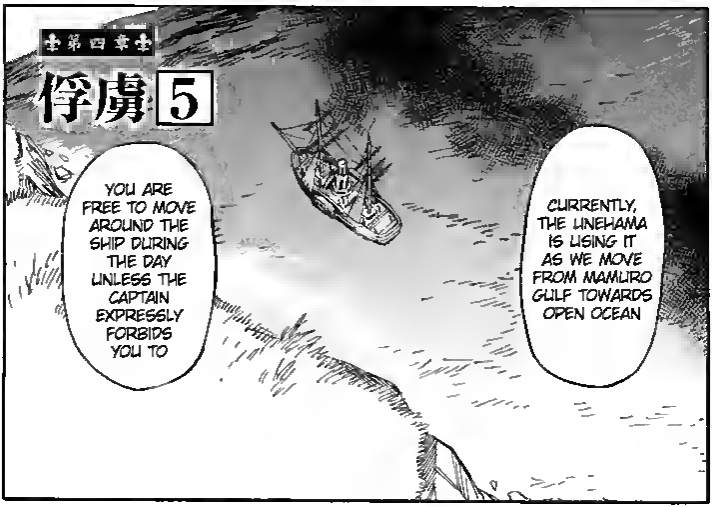
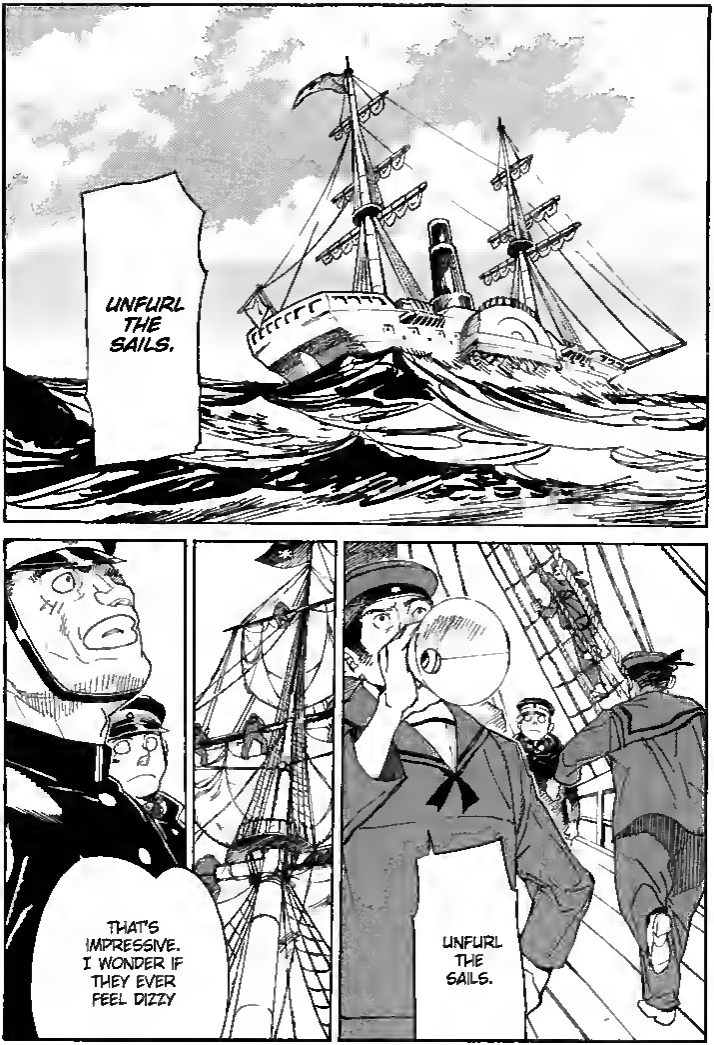
Translator: DiamondEdge
Clean/type: Noon
QC: JAC

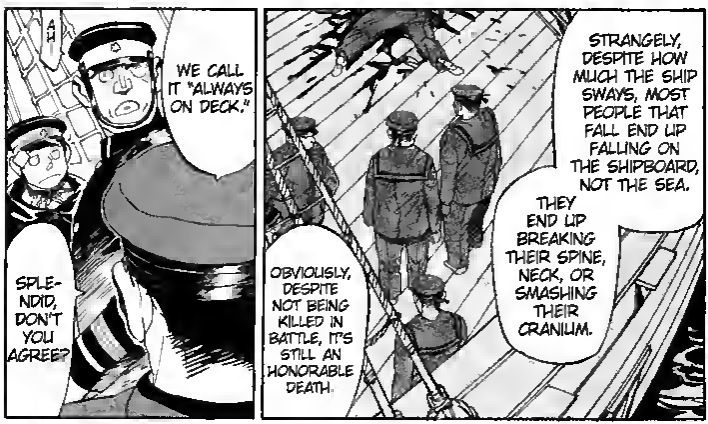
THAT'S A FAIRLY SHOWY DISPLAY YOU'VE PUT ON FOR THE ROYAL ARMY
WE WANTED TO SHOW THEM WE'RE A REAL THREAT


THEY STILL USE STEAM ENGINES ONLY FOR MINING
THIS IS A STATE OF THE ART WARSHIP EQUIPPED WITH A STEAM ENGINE

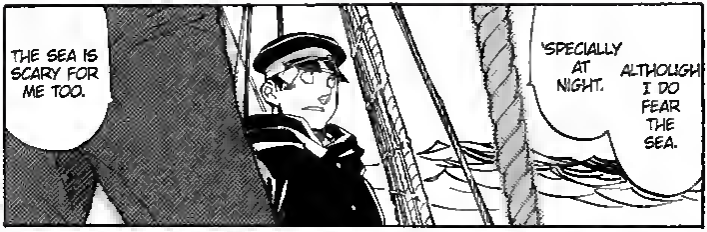

第四章
俘虜5
CURRENTLY, THE UNEHAMA IS USING IT AS WE MOVE FROM MAMURO GULF TOWARDS OPEN OCEAN
YOU ARE FREE TO MOVE AROUND THE SHIP DURING THE DAY UNLESS THE CAPTAIN EXPRESSLY FORBIDS YOU TO


UNFURL THE SAILS.
THAT'S IMPRESSIVE. I WONDER IF THEY EVER FEEL DIZZY
UNFURL THE SAILS.

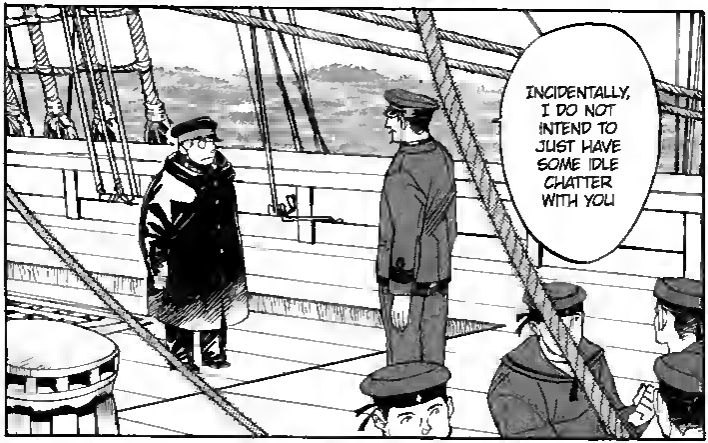
NOT EVERYONE THAT CAN GET USED TO THAT KIND OF HEIGHT
THAT'S THE MAIN REASON WHY THE NAVY HAS TO RECRUIT NEW SEAMEN EVERY YEAR
THEY DO, OF COURSE.


WE CALL IT "ALWAYS ON DECK."
SPLE-NDID, DON'T YOU AGREE?
OBVIOUSLY, DESPITE NOT BEING KILLED IN BATTLE, IT'S STILL AN HONORABLE DEATH.
THEY END UP BREAKING THEIR SPINE, NECK, OR SMASHING THEIR CRANIUM.
STRANGELY, DESPITE HOW MUCH THE SHIP SWAYS, MOST PEOPLE THAT FALL END UP FALLING ON THE SHIPBOARD, NOT THE SEA.

I SHOULDN'T COME BACK
I'M STARTING TO GET SEASICK MYSELF. I'LL GO BACK TO THE CABIN
EXCUSE ME.
BY NOW THE SOLDIER QUARTERS MUST BE PRETTY SMELLY.
EVERYONE MUST BE RUNNING WITH THEIR NOSES COVERED
IS THAT BASED ON YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE?
DURING THE WEEK LONG PRACTICE SAILING I MAY HAVE ALMOST DONE SO
IT TOOK ME ALMOST HALF A YEAR TO STOP GETTING SEASICK.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I LIKE SHIPS.
DOESN'T MATTER IF IT'S CARGO SHIPS OR NAVY SHIPS


THE SEA IS SCARY FOR ME TOO.
'SPECIALLY AT NIGHT.
ALTHOUGH I DO FEAR THE SEA.

IF YOU DO NOT FEAR THE SEA, YOU CAN MAKE EXTREMELY FOOLISH DECISIONS AS A NAVY OFFICER
IT'S THE TRUTH.


INCIDENTALLY, I DO NOT INTEND TO JUST HAVE SOME IDLE CHATTER WITH YOU

IT SEEMS THERE IS A MESSENGER ON THIS SHIP ON BEHALF OF THE SUPREME COMMAND
I AM NOT THE ONE IN CHARGE OF THIS SHIP.

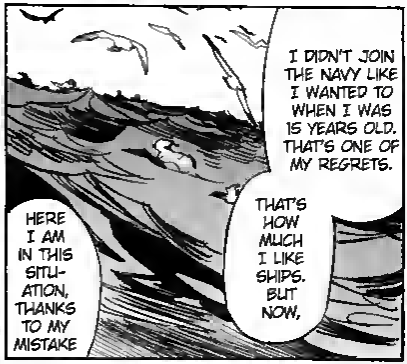
WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY THE ROYAL ARMY
ISN'T THERE SOMETING ELSE YOU MUST ASK OF ME?
BUT THAT WAS BECAUSE OF A STORM. I DO NOT BLAME YOU AT ALL.
I CERTAINLY DIDN'T LIKE IT AT ALL.
I'M SURE THE CAPTAIN AND ALL IT'S CREW DID EVERYTHING THEY COULD
THE OOSE

HOWEVER, I COULDN'T NOT INFORM YOU ABOUT OUR SUCESSFUL ESCAPE.
WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THAT?

I HAVE...
MANY REGRETS.

HOW'S THAT RELATED?
WELL, YOU SEE...

EHH, I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT VERY WELL.
THAT DOESN'T SEEM TO BE THE TRUTH.

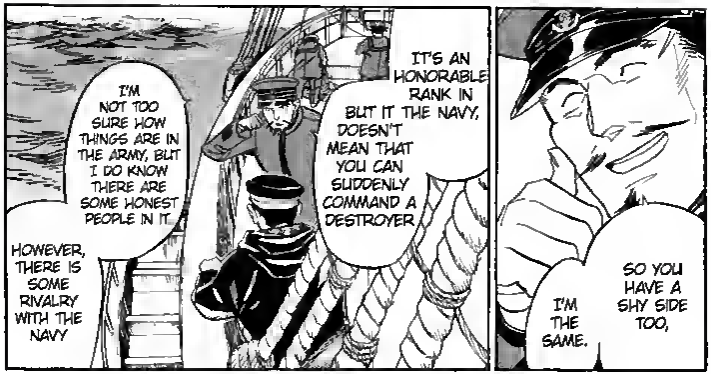

I DIDN'T JOIN THE NAVY LIKE I WANTED TO WHEN I WAS 15 YEARS OLD. THAT'S ONE OF MY REGRETS.
THAT'S HOW MUCH I LIKE SHIPS. BUT NOW,
HERE I AM IN THIS SITU-ATION, THANKS TO MY MISTAKE

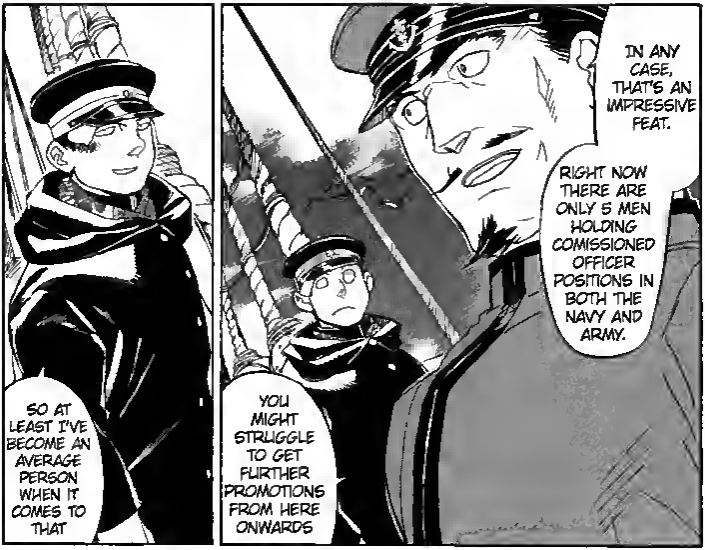
IF I REALLY HAD JOINED THE NAVY, AT THE VERY LEAST I WOULD MISS THE ACQUAINTANCES I MADE WHILE I WAS A PRISONER.
THAT'S WHAT I BELIEVE.
I HAVE LIED TO YOU ONCE.
SO, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIE TO ME AS WELL, IF YOU WANT.
FOR EXAMPLE, RIGHT NOW.
THANK YOU.
I WANT THIS TO BE JUST LIKE WHAT YOU SAID BEFORE
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

YOU MEAN I SHOULDN'T FORGET MY DEBT?
IS THAT IT?
IF IT'S ONCE OR TWICE..
BUT ARE WE SURE IT WASN'T IT THREE TIMES?
HUH?
WHAT IS IT?
IF THERE'S SOMETHING TROUBLING YOU THAT YOU NEED HELP WITH, I'LL DO IT
I AM INDEBTED TO YOU AFTER ALL

IN PARTICULAR, ABOUT THE SUMMER COUNTER OFFENSIVE?
I HAVE HEARD SOME SUSPICIOUS THINGS
BUT WHAT THE HELL,
DO YOU INTEND TO DO FROM NOW ON?
I JUST WANT TO RETURN TO THE CAPITAL AND REST FOR A WHILE
I DON'T HAVE ANY PLANS FOR NOW
MAJOR
YOU'RE AS COMPLEX AS I THOUGHT,
YOU'RE SURPRISINGLY STIFF.
EVEN BEFORE I WAS TAKEN IN BY THE KUCHIRO FAMILY,
I WAS NOT VERY OUTSPOKEN

I'M A CAPTAIN.
I DID KEEP WHAT I COULD OF MY PROMISE
YOU'RE NOW A MAJOR
HUH... OF THE NAVY?


I'M NOT TOO SURE HOW THINGS ARE IN THE ARMY, BUT I DO KNOW THERE ARE SOME HONEST PEOPLE IN IT.
HOWEVER, THERE IS SOME RIVALRY WITH THE NAVY
IT'S AN HONORABLE RANK IN BUT IT THE NAVY, DOESN'T MEAN THAT YOU CAN SUDDENLY COMMAND A DESTROYER
SO YOU HAVE A SHY SIDE TOO,
I'M THE SAME.


IN ANY CASE, THAT'S AN IMPRESSIVE FEAT.
RIGHT NOW THERE ARE ONLY 5 MEN HOLDING COMISSIONED OFFICER POSITIONS IN BOTH THE NAVY AND ARMY.
YOU MIGHT STRUGGLE TO GET FURTHER PROMOTIONS FROM HERE ONWARDS
SO AT LEAST I'VE BECOME AN AVERAGE PERSON WHEN IT COMES TO THAT
IS THAT BECAUSE OF YOUR UPBRINGING?
YOU DON'T THINK IT WAS BECAUSE OF YOUR CHARACTER AND SKILLS, MAJOR?
WELL, I CAN RELATE WITH YOU
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
I DO NOT DISLIKE TAKING PRIDE IN MY OWN MISFORTUNE
I SEE.
IT WASN'T EASY FOR ME EITHER.

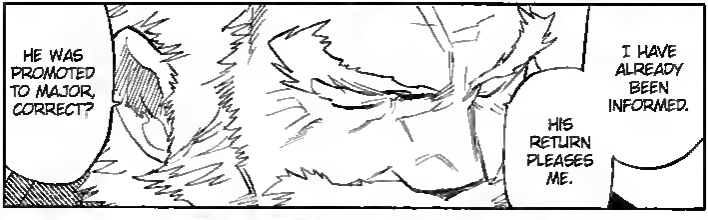
DO YOU HAVE AN OLDER BROTHER?
MY FATHER WAS A BOATMAN AND OWNED A SMALL CARGO VESSEL. HE HAD AN ENORMOUS DEBT TO HIS NAME
AFTER A SHIPWRECK, PEOPLE CAME TO COLLECT IT
I WAS JUST FIVE YEARS OLD WHEN MY FATHER DIED
AND ALL MOTHER COULD DO WAS KEEP ME AND MY OLDER BROTHER FROM STARVING
HE BECAME THE SERVANT OF A MAJOR SHIP MERCHANT FROM THE SOUTH
IT WAS THANKS TO MY BROTHER THAT I WAS ABLE TO RECEIVE A DECENT EDUCATION

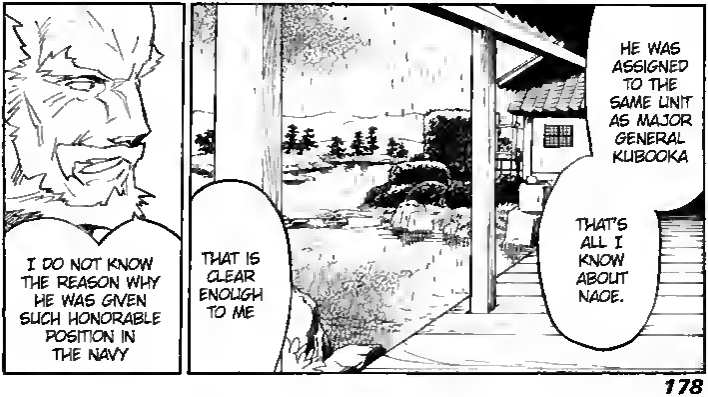
WHEN I DECIDED TO JOIN THE NAVY,
HE SAID: "YOU'RE ALSO THE SON OF OUR FATHER".
I WAS EXTREMELY HAPPY.

DARE I SAY,
I'M STILL HAPPY TO THIS DAY.
COMM-ANDER.
CALL ME SASAJIMA.
SHINJO.
SASA-JIMA...
IF YOU COULD EXCUSE MY RUDENESS...
I MUST SAY I'M VERY JEALOUS OF YOU

AT THE VERY LEAST, YOU HAVE A DISTINCT PLACE YOU CAME FROM TO GET HERE
I AM CONVINCED OF THAT,
BUT WASN'T THAT WAY TOO SUMM-ARIZED?
THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE BEEN ACKNO-WLEDGED THIS WAY
I'M NOT SURE IF I SHOULD FEEL UNCOMFORTA BLE OR BE MOVED TO TEARS BY HEARING
NO, THAT JUST COMES WITH MY PROF-ESSION.
I SEE.
WE ARE SOLDIERS,
THAT'S OUR UNFOR-TUNATE CONDITION
I DO NOT QUESTION THAT

NAOE HAS RETURNED.
Imperial Capitcal, Kushiro Estate


I HAVE ALREADY BEEN INFORMED.
HIS RETURN PLEASES ME.
HE WAS PROMOTED TO MAJOR, CORRECT?

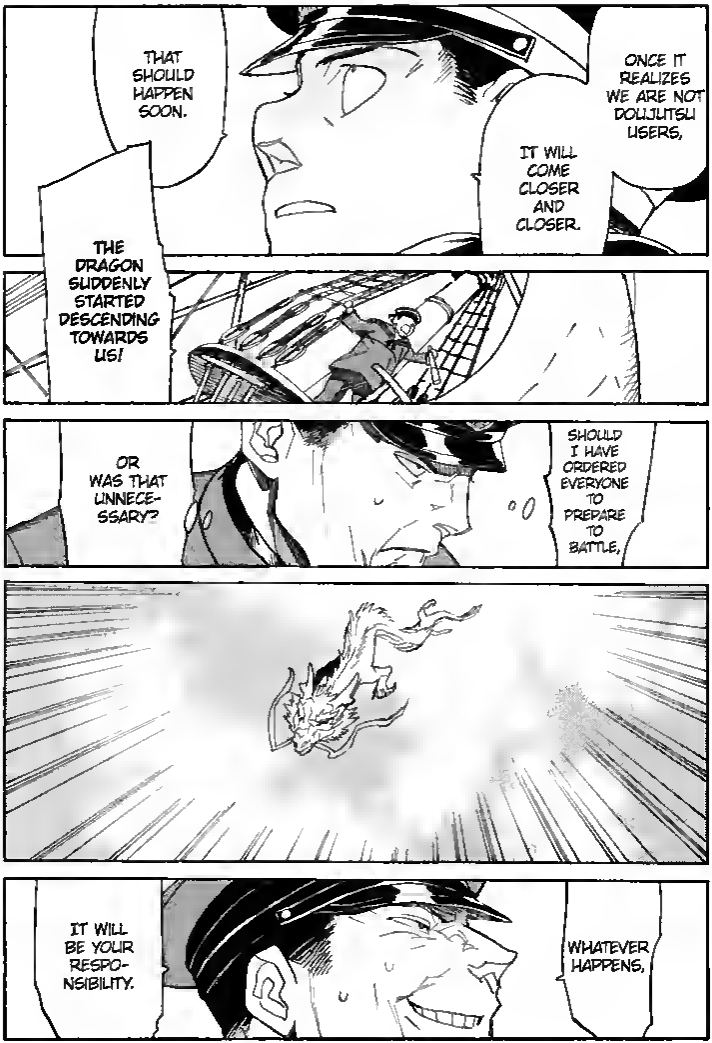

HE WAS ASSIGNED TO THE SAME UNIT AS MAJOR GENERAL KUBOOKA
THAT'S ALL I KNOW ABOUT NAOE.
THAT IS CLEAR ENOUGH TO ME
I DO NOT KNOW THE REASON WHY HE WAS GIVEN SUCH HONORABLE POSITION IN THE NAVY

I'M NOT TOO CERTAIN ABOUT IT EITHER. HOWEVER,
IT SEEMS IT WAS A FAVOR FROM SOMEONE ELSE
HE'S RESEMBLING HIS BROTHER MORE AND MORE
THAT'S NOT THE ONLY REASON WHY HE BECAME MAJOR.
YES.
THAT WAS SOMETHING REQUIRED.
TO AID US IN STOPPING THIS SUMMER COUNTER OFFENSIVE

THERE'S A HIGH DRAGON NEAR THE SHIP, TO THE STARBOARD.
Eastern sea, third day of voyage.
4 days to reach the capital.

WHAT A TENSE ATMOS-PHERE.
IT'S RARE TO SEE A HIGH DRAGON IN THESE SEAS, INSTEAD OF A SEA DRAGON.
YOU'RE AWFULLY CALM.
THAT DRAGON LOOKS...

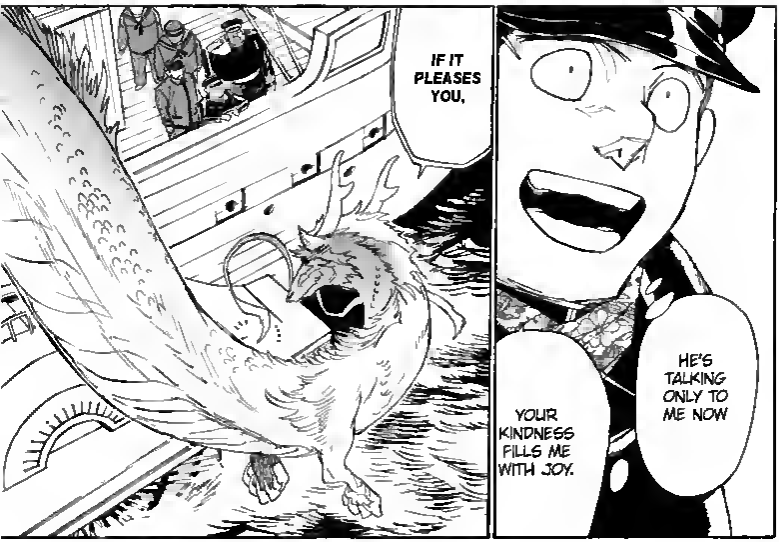
A LOT LIKE A DRAGON I'VE MET BEFORE
PLEASE COME WITH ME TO THE BRIDGE.
CAPTAIN MORITE IS CLEVER, BUT IS BEING A BIT TOO DILIGENT.
WE ARE NOT READY FOR BATTLE.
HOW IS THAT?
YOU'RE SAYING THAT DRAGON IS AN ACQUAINTANCE OF YOURS?
EVEN WITHOUT A SILVER GEM EMBEDDED IN THEIR FOREHEADS, ORDINARY PEOPLE CAN STILL FEEL DOUJUTSU,
BUT ONLY WHEN THERE'S A VERY STRONG SIGNAL AT A CLOSE DISTANCE
I FEEL LIKE HE'S EMANATING SOME OF THE SAME ENERGY
YES.


THAT SHOULD HAPPEN SOON.
ONCE IT REALIZES WE ARE NOT DOUJUTSU USERS,
IT WILL COME CLOSER AND CLOSER.
THE DRAGON SUDDENLY STARTED DESCENDING TOWARDS US!
OR WAS THAT UNNECESSARY?
SHOULD I HAVE ORDERED EVERYONE TO PREPARE TO BATTLE,
IT WILL BE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.
WHATEVER HAPPENS,

I AM NOT YOUR ENEMY.
I AM NOT YOUR ENEMY.
IS THAT... THE DRAGON?
I HAVE COME TO GREET A FRIEND OF MINE WHO IS ABOARD YOUR SHIP.
THIS "VOICE" IS DOUJI-UTSU..

I AM TRULY HONORED BY YOUR VISIT.

YOUR SAFE RETURN WAS BROUGHT TO MY ATTENTION.
CONSIDERED THIS MIGHT INCONVENIENCE YOU. BUT...


IF IT PLEASES YOU,
YOUR KINDNESS FILLS ME WITH JOY.
HE'S TALKING ONLY TO ME NOW

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY,
TO SHARE A FEW WORDS AND CELEBRATE.

I AM EMBARASSED
I DID NOT TAKE THAT INTO CONSIDERATION.

I APPRECIATE YOUR GESTURE,
BUT RETURNING TOGETHER WITH MY SUBORDINATES IS PART OF MY DUTY AS THEIR COMMANDER.

WOULD YOU BY ANY CHANCE LIKE A RIDE TO THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL?

I AM AFRAID I MIGHT BE IMPOSING TOO MUCH UPON YOU
WE SHOULD END OUR CONVERSATION HERE FOR TODAY
WE SHALL CELEBRATE YOUR PROMOTION,
WHEN ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY ARISES.
I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AGAIN WHEN WE REACH THE CAPITAL, BANDOU.
I WILL BE TAKING MY LEAVE NOW

I SEE A SEA DRAGON.
IT SEEMS HE SENSED THAT HIGH DRAGON AND CAME TOWARDS IT

WHAT DO THEY USE THAT POWER F
NAH I M JUST BEING INSOLENT
THE TALES SAY THEY ARE THE GREATEST OF ALL DRAGONS
THAT HIGH DRAGON OVERS-HADOWS EVEN A CRUISER.
IT LOOKS LIKE ALL DRAGONS ARE ABLE TO USE AND SENSE DOUJUTSU
YOUR CHOICE OF FRIENDS IS VERY INTERESTING
THAT CAN'T SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
YOU'RE THE ONE PERSON.

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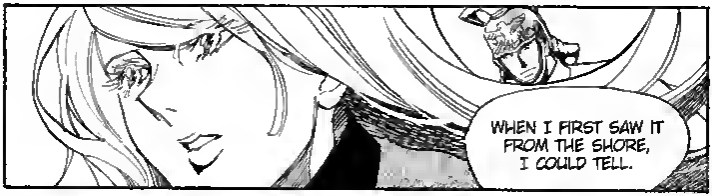
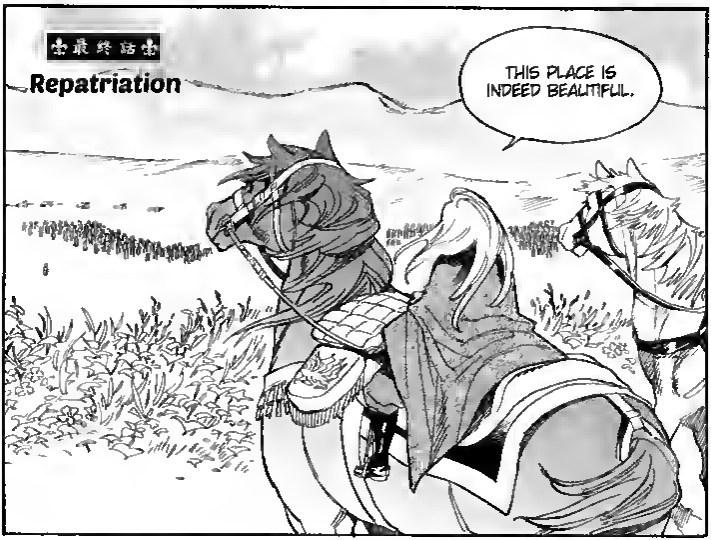
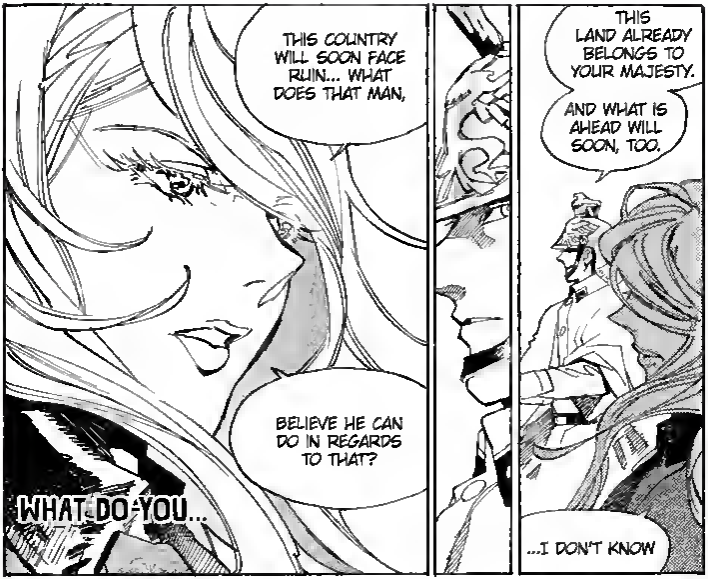
Translator: DiamondEdge
Clean/type: Noon
QC: JAC

皇國の守護者


WHEN I FIRST SAW IT FROM THE SHORE, I COULD TELL.

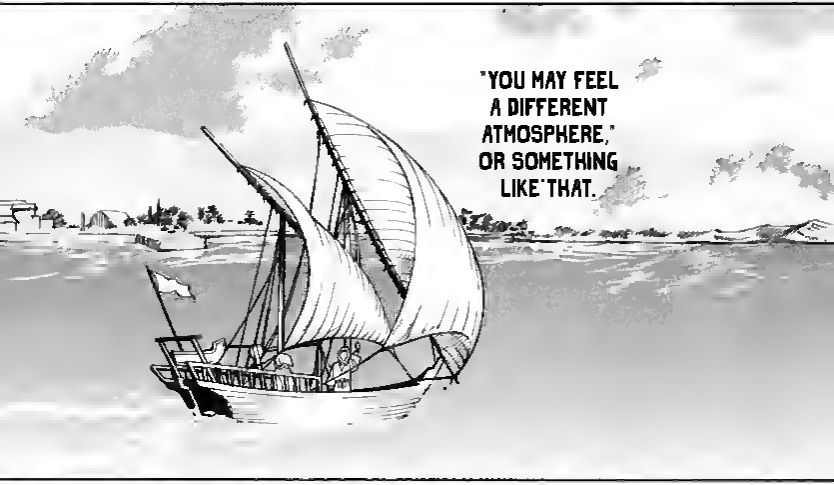

最终话
Repatriation
THIS PLACE IS INDEED BEAUTIFUL.


THIS COUNTRY WILL SOON FACE RUIN... WHAT DOES THAT MAN,
BELIEVE HE CAN DO IN REGARDS TO THAT?
WHAT DO YOU...
THIS LAND ALREADY BELONGS TO YOUR MAJESTY.
AND WHAT IS AHEAD WILL SOON, TOO.
...I DON'T KNOW

WHAT DO YOU HAVE?
IT'S OUR HOME-LAND!
IT'S OUR HOME-LAND!
THE WEATHER IS GOOD, AND THE WINDS AND SEA ARE CALM!

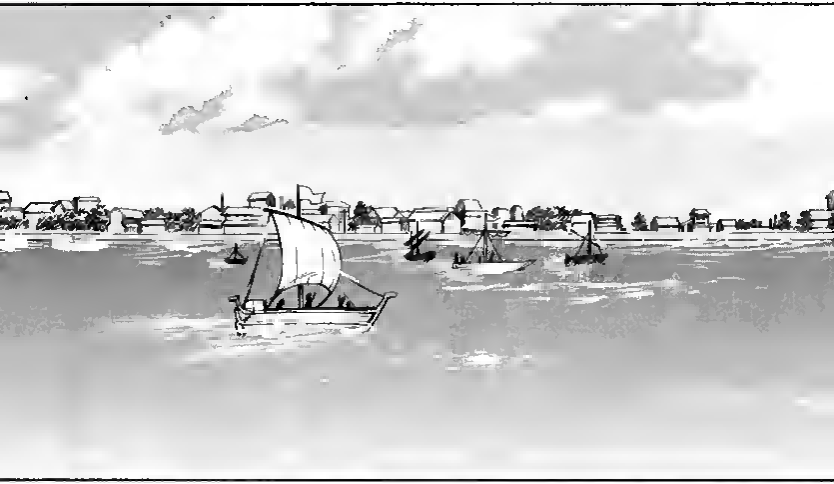
YUMISE BAY IS VISIBLE PAST THIS SHIP'S STARBOARD BOW
OUR HOMELAND.
FOR NOW WE SHOULD REJOICE THAT WE ARE ALIVE
REMEMBER THE FACES OF YOUR PARENTS AND LOVERS, AND BE GLAD
WE CAN'T SAY THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES ARE PART OF THIS NATION ANYMORE

THIS IS VERY SURPRISING.

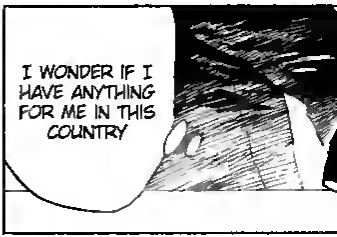

"YOU MAY FEEL A DIFFERENT ATMOSPHERE," OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

THERE'S SOMETHING I REALLY DISLIKE, BUT I HAVE TO FOCUS ONLY ON RECOVERING FROM THIS DEFEAT

THIS IS HOW MUCH I FEEL HOMESICK.

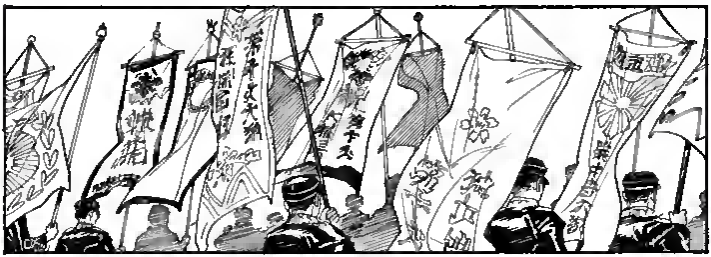


WELL,
ホロ


I WONDER IF I HAVE ANYTHING FOR ME IN THIS COUNTRY

IT'S OUR HOME.
OUR HOME.
HEEEY!
HEEEY!
HEEEY!
HEEEY!

THANKS FOR YOUR HARD WORK.
EVERYONE, THIS IS OUR HOME.

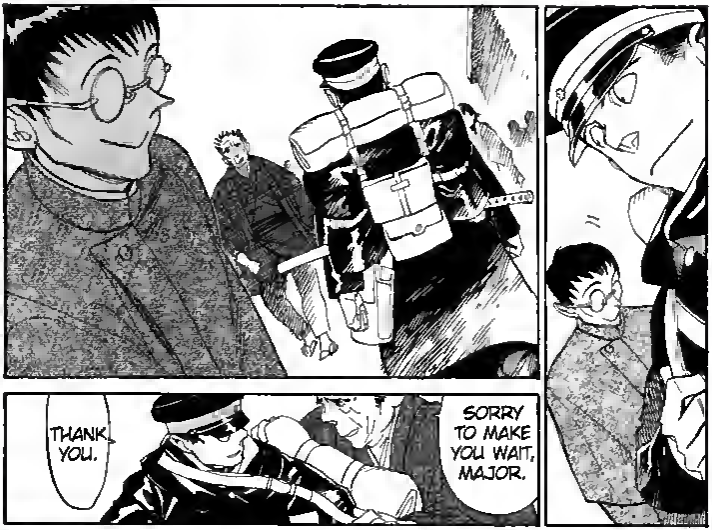


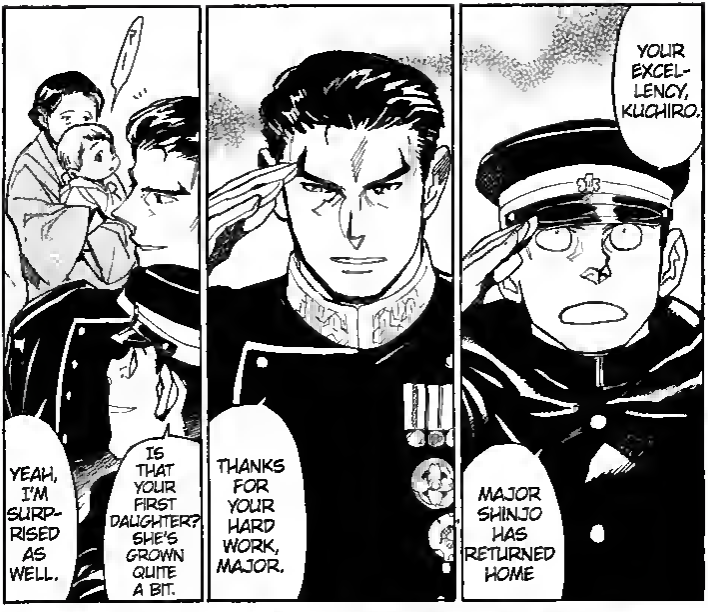
COULD YOU GO TO THE ARMY HEADQUARTERS AFTER THIS?
IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE YOU WANT TO DISCUSS MY DUTIES NOW THAT I'VE BEEN PROMOTED TO MAJOR
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
RETURNING AS A HERO HAS DRAWN SOME ATTENTION TO YOU.
HONESTLY, YOU'VE GOTTEN ON THE WRONG SIDE OF QUITE A FEW PEOPLE.
THIS IS TROUBLESOME.

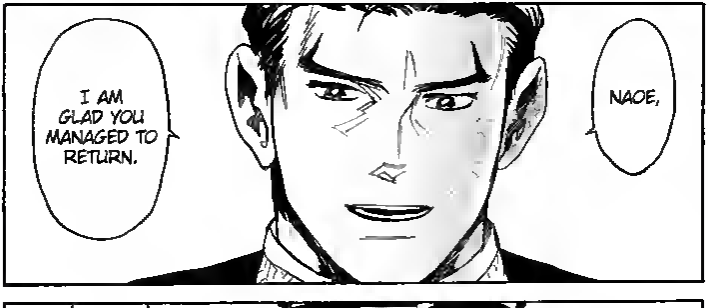
I CANNOT TRUST EVEN A MEMBER OF THE KUCHIRO HOUSE.
AH WELL,
EXCEPT FOR YOUR OLDER BROTHER.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH I MIGHT WANT TO, THERE ARE SOME THINGS I JUST CAN'T SAY
I AM ONLY FOLLOW-ING MY ORDERS
HE'S A REALLY GOOD PERSON
I KNOW IT.
IF THAT WEREN'T THE CASE, HE WOULDN'T BE WITH MY SISTER
AS FAR AS I KNOW, HE'S ONE OF THE MAIN PEOPLE TRYING TO CONVINCE THE ARMY ABOUT THE SUMMER COUNTER-OFFENSIVE
ANYONE WHO IS DISLIKED BY GENERAL MORIHARA HAS TO BE A GOOD PERSON

THAT "GOOD" BROTHER OF YOURS,
HAS ASKED ME TO RELAY YOU A TAS...
I DO OWE HIM A FAVOR.
I'LL DO IT.
CURRENTLY THERE ARE PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY WHO ARE HARBORING SOME RESENTMEANT TOWARDS YOU THIS CAN BE DANGEROUS
I DON'T PARTICU-LARLY CARE, NOR HAVE TIME FOR IT
I DON'T LIKE BEING TEASED.
I SEE. YOU'RE RIGHT. IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME
AND WHAT ABOUT TEA-SING?
SINCE YOU'VE BULLIED SOME-ONE.

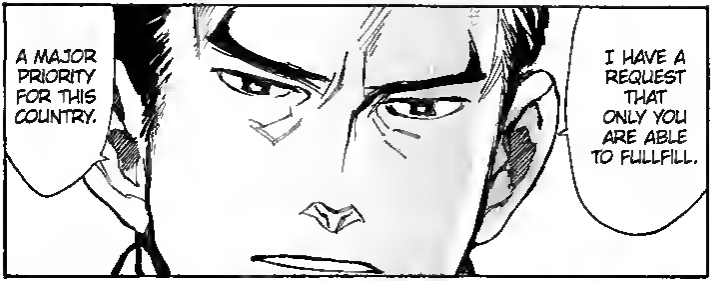
ALL YOU DO IS EXTERMINATE YOUR "ENEMIES,"
UTTERLY AND THOROUGHLY SO.
BUT BEFORE THAT, HOW ABOUT GOING OUT TO DRINK SOMEDAY SOON?
IT SEEMS WE ARE DONE FOR TODAY, I'LL HAVE TO LEAVE YOU FOR NOW

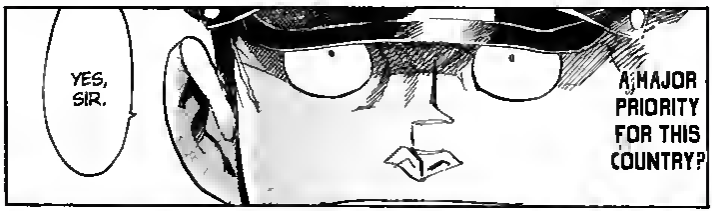

SORRY TO MAKE YOU WAIT, MAJOR.
THANK YOU.


YOUR EXCEL-LENCY, KUCHIRO.
MAJOR SHINJO HAS RETURNED HOME
THANKS FOR YOUR HARD WORK, MAJOR.
IS THAT YOUR FIRST DAUGHTER? SHE'S GROWN QUITE A BIT.
YEAH, I'M SURP-RISED AS WELL.


NAOE,
I AM GLAD YOU MANAGED TO RETURN.

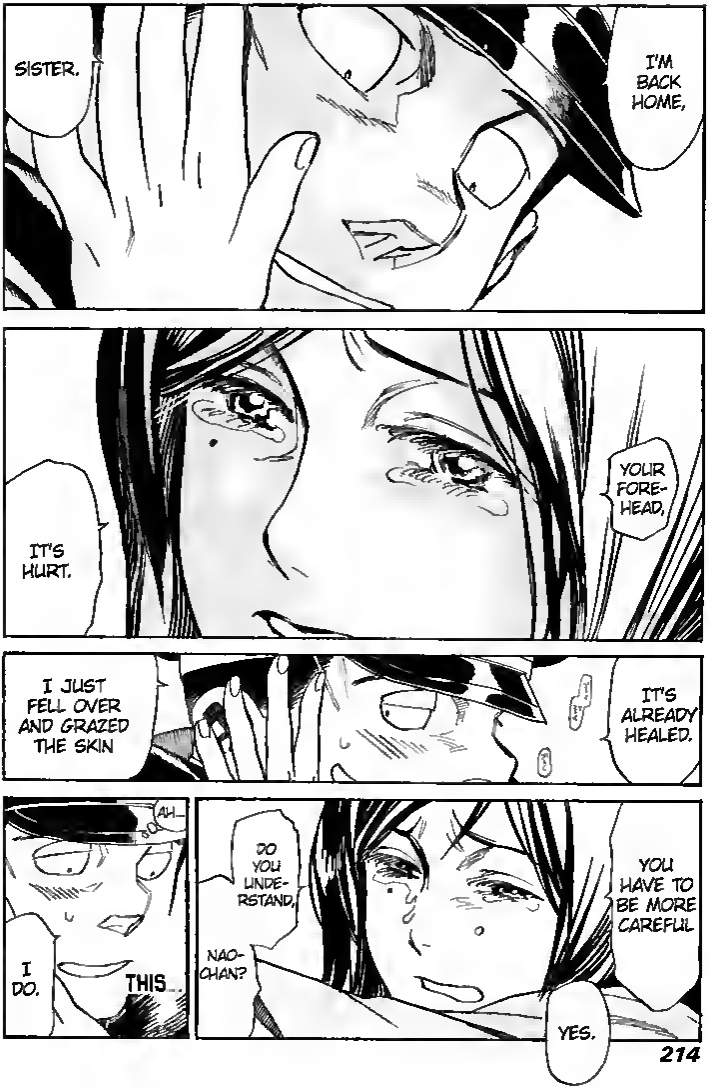
YES, SIR.


A MAJOR PRIORITY FOR THIS COUNTRY.
I HAVE A REQUEST THAT ONLY YOU ARE ABLE TO FULLFILL.


YES, SIR.
A MAJOR PRIORITY FOR THIS COUNTRY?

CAN I DO
SOMETHING,
FOR THIS
COUNTRY?

FOR
SOMEONE...


SISTER.
I'M BACK HOME,
IT'S HURT.
YOUR FORE-HEAD,
I JUST FELL OVER AND GRAZED THE SKIN
IT'S ALREADY HEALED.
AH...
I DO.
THIS...
DO YOU UNDE-RSTAND, NAO-CHAN?
YOU HAVE TO BE MORE CAREFUL
YES.

SINCE YOU WERE SMALL, YOU'VE PULLED OFF UNREASONABLE STUNTS JUST TO SHOW OFF.
EVEN THOUGH ALL IT DID WAS SCARE ME
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND!
ウッ
ウッ
ウッ
ウッ

I NEED TO GO TO THE ARMY HEADQUARTERS NOW
WELL THEN, I'M OFF.

CHIHAYA! COME HERE.

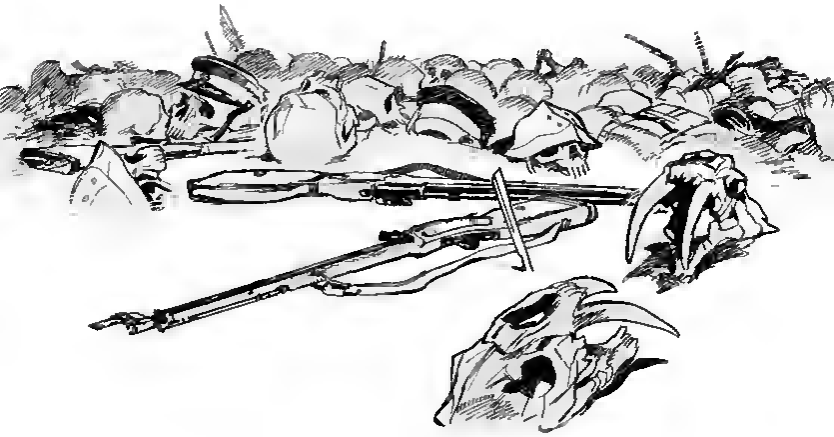
ニャオーン

In the last three months, approximately 110,000 soldiers of the royal army enacted "Operation Alexandros", and invaded the northern region of Ryuushuu.

To prevent their advance, Shinjo saw the deaths of thousands of his companions...

...and what they did
for their country.

For someone.



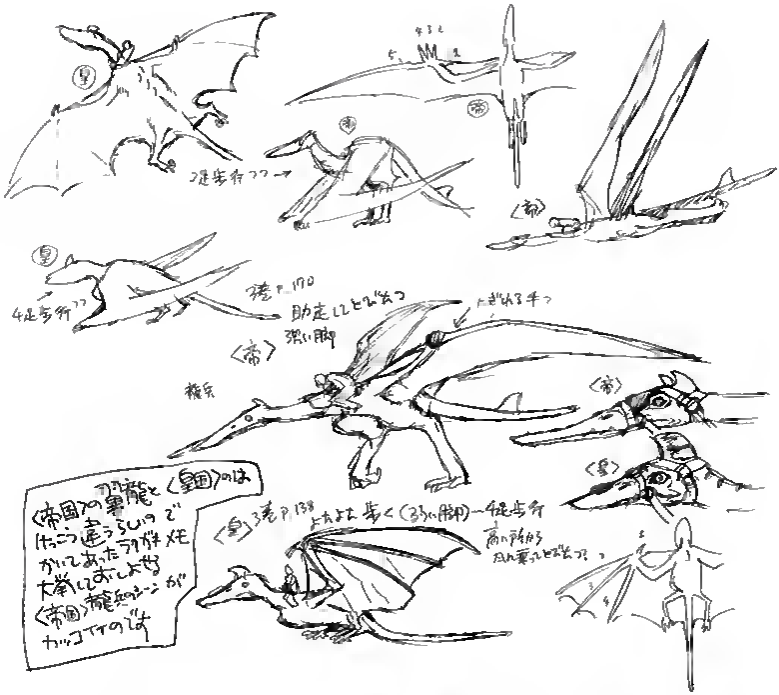
Imperial Guards - The End

ウラ!ウラ!任務完了です

ここまでつたない作画を見守って下さった読者の皆さん本当にありがとうございました!

この巻の2回目から急遽ネームチェック頂いた佐藤先生お手数おかけしました 担当のステキな西田詰り書をおろしありがとうございました!

いそがしい中いつもいつも作画を手伝いに来てくれたスペシャリスト人々ありがとう



「皇国の守護者」バンザイ！ 敬意と誠意と感謝と

愛をこめ

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剣虎兵、絶望の雪原（サーヘルタイガース）

皇国の守護者

原作：佐藤大輔（中央公論新社刊「皇国の守護者」より）　漫画：伊藤 悠　●B6判

皇国の守護者

◘ 手伝ってくれた人々 ◘

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◘ 感謝 ◘

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伸童舎

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LIGHTNING

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ヤングジャンプ・コミックス・ウルトラ

皇国の守護者 五

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